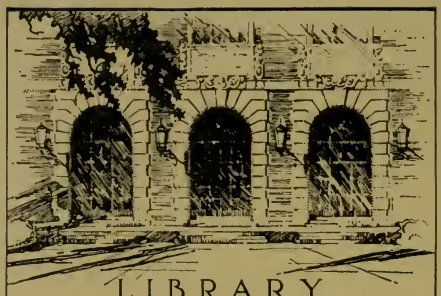

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
823
P3132c
v.3

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

http://www.archive.org/details/carouselecelebrat03peak

CARTOUCHE,

THE

CELEBRATED FRENCH ROBBER.

CARTOUCHE,

THE

CELEBRATED FRENCH ROBBER.

BY

R. B. PEAKE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

"Some authors in the vain attempt to be *cutting* and *dry*, give us only that which is *cut* and *dried*."—LACON.

LONDON:
HUGH CUNNINGHAM, 193, STRAND.

1844.

Aird and Burstall, Printers, 2, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden.

823
P3132 ~
v.3

THE

ADVENTURES OF CARTOUCHE.

CHAPTER XX.

CARTOUCHE RETIRES TO A COUNTRY RESIDENCE, WHERE HE ENTERTAINS HIS FRIENDS AND HIS FRIENDS ENTERTAIN HIM—ETIENNE AND FERRAND RELATE CERTAIN INTERESTING PORTIONS OF THEIR HISTORY.

So absorbed were the public with the Mississippi speculations, that the violent death of the stock-broker was forgotten, as far as *the public* went, in three days! And so infatuated were the people, that when honest Mareschal Villars, who was a decided enemy to all gambling, and depending on the popularity he had gained

h

(and most deservedly earned, during the long war with the allies), thought it advisable boldly and honestly to harangue the Parisian populace, on the subject of their mania, for which good intention and office he was pelted in his carriage, and the windows of his mansion were broken. So much for mob-gratitude! But such was the power of the hope of gain, that the following noblemen fell in, perhaps for the first time in France, with popular opinion, and became enriched by this delusive scheme, at the certainty of its being the beggary of thousands. The Dukes de Bourbon, de Guiche, de la Force, de Chaulnes, D'Autin; Mareschal D'Etrées; the Princes de Rohan, de Poix, de Leon, &c., &c.

The Regent, however, commanded a strict investigation and search to be made, and issued some very sarcastic remarks on the administration of the police. This put the various officers more on their mettle, although it must be owned that they were one and all longing more to

dabble their hands *in the stocks*, than to put the legs of prisoners into them.

We have stated that Cartouche had quitted Paris; like other great men, in the vacations of business, or when affairs are wearing a serious or unpleasant aspect, Louis Dominique retired into the country to his estate, such as it was. At any rate, it was a secure hiding place, and had been so for malefactors for a considerable period.

There were some ancient tile-kilns at Clichy, which had not been used for half a century: and as for fifty years there had existed an unsettled law question in the French Courts of Chancery, concerning to whom they belonged, the original proprietors, their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, were all in their graves. Not a claimant to the concern had appeared for many years. The owl built its nest in it. The little, apparently desolate, road-side inn, known by the name of *Le Pistolet* (already mentioned as the place wherein Cartouche met Bras

D'Acier, subsequent to his adventure with the hellish undertaker): this out-of-the way *auberge* was to be sold cheap, and it fell into the hands of a gentleman connected with the associated worthies of Paris, who viewed it with an eye to his great future gain.

He was perfectly aware that one professor or other must occasionally be in trouble, and at the shortest notice would require meat, drink, lodging, and concealment; so with a praiseworthy foresight, and considerable labour and expence, he caused to be constructed from the cellar of the tavern to the lower portion of the old unused tile-kilns, a subterraneous passage. The interior of the apparently forsaken building was fitted up with some attention to the comforts of the cavaliers, who, the landlord of *Le Pistolet* imagined, would frequently be his guests, and prefer the quiet of privacy to the bustle of his hotel.

The eatables, wine, and brandy, were served from *Le Pistolet;* for it would not have been

advisable to have it observed that the smoke occasioned by cookery, should emerge from the orifices or furnaces of kilns that had been abandoned for fifty years.

Behold, now, Messieurs Cartouche and Etienne (two principals in a cruel murder), with Ferrand and Dumesnil, to keep them company, located together in the tile-kiln of Clichy, which was substantially, if not luxuriously, furnished—the apartment having been floored, and bedsteads placed against the interior walls, which were circular; the shape of their dwelling was that of a large inverted cone, and the light issued from the opening at the top: if the weather was wet, or cold, a canvas roof, tent-like, covered the heads of the inhabitants. At night, they were lighted by lamps stolen from a gaming house, from which same repository, and on the same terms, were furnished cards, dice-boxes, backgammon-boards, and other playful implements to solace the gentlemen-lodgers when they were compelled to stay

within. Not satisfied with these comforts for their diversion in the hour of adversity, these luxurious thieves vented their execrations on the planner of the subterranean passage, because he had not excavated it sufficiently wide to admit of the reception of a billiard table, and a recently invented harpsichord, then much in vogue with fashionable society in Paris, both of which would have been immediately supplied by the public, gratuitously.

Here these brigands gormandised and gambled; but as they could not always be eating and drinking, it was agreed, to pass the time, that each of them should relate some strange portion of their adventures.

Cartouche had been amusing his confederates with the history of the jealousy of Monsieur de Hautefort:

"I would wager a hundred crowns," exclaimed Etienne, "(provided I had not got them), that none of you ever witnessed such a specimen of jealousy, deliberate cruelty, and revenge, as I

once did in Italy. When I was very young, I entered the service of the Marchese di Carrara as page; the Marchese was a noble of large but somewhat unprofitable possessions, who had recently married a beautiful woman, of good family and fortune. They resided in a château a few miles distant from a small town in Piedmont, and received many visitors, consisting chiefly of the families of the neighbourhood, and the occasional travellers who chanced to have letters of recommendation to the residents there.

"The Marchese was considerably older than his bride; he was naturally harsh and stern in his manner; and how so lovely and gentle a creature could ever brook the cold authority that distinguished his conduct before the honeymoon was half passed, I never could surmise. But the odious point in his character which seemed to pain her much more than the harshness to which she was so often a victim, was groundless jealousy.

"At first, by a thousand winning ways, she tried to shame him out of the constant suspicion which haunted his mind; but finding her playful efforts unavailing, she contented herself with avoiding any intercourse with strangers, which could be construed by her lynx-eyed spouse as stolen from the measure of his cup of love. One night the villa was thrown open to a large party of guests, who enjoyed themselves in gaiety and revelry. I observed the Marchese di Carrara to be moody, participating but little in the entertainments, and keeping a watchful eye on the movements of his wife. Most of the company were well known to him; some, indeed, were present who had not been formally introduced, but accompanied friends who had the *entrée*. Among these I recognised a young Englishman, named Vernon, who was making the grand tour, and who seemed to be particularly struck with the charms of my mistress. He was her companion in the dance; there were several reasons why her so-

ciety should be so attractive to him, one of which was, that she understood a little of the English language, and moreover did not laugh at his somewhat equivocal efforts to converse with her in Italian.

"These were the last happy hours that my poor mistress was ever doomed to enjoy; for on the following day, on the bare suspicion of a crime of which she was wholly innocent, she was hurried away by the Marchese di Carrara to a ruined castle on a distant part of his estate, in the forest of Sesia: forced from her home by the man she loved, notwithstanding all his cruelty towards her, and who from that moment had resolved never to open his lips to her again! The fatal cause of his unfortunate delusion I learnt afterwards.

"On the morning subsequent to the ball, the Marchese di Carrara had discovered an English watch hanging by his wife's bedside, and, refusing to listen to the explanation she proffered, he took a solemn vow to revenge his injured

honour: and, while he guarded over her so carefully that she could never again wander from the paths of duty, he made up his mind to that fatal course which ended in the death alike of the innocent and the revengeful.

"The Marchese carried with him no attendants excepting myself. An aged female domestic at the ruined castle occasionally waited on the unhappy wife; but she was bound by so strict an oath to hold no conversation with the Marchesa, that the relief her presence might have afforded, was converted into a fresh confirmation of her miserable fate. She felt that she was immured in this silent prison until death should release her from her thraldom. And how long might she live? God alone knew! She had heard often, and tremblingly, that the existence of those with whom the glorious MIND was a blank, crept slowly on till old age completed the work which sorrow or despair had begun; and the victim dropped into the grave, unknown—unwept—unloved—forgotten!"

"Hark you," interrupted Cartouche, "we ask for neither sentiment nor morality in your history; it will be quite thrown away upon us. If you expect us to weep at the recital of the Marchesa's woes, you may just as well draw milk from flints. I dare say there were some grounds for the jealousy of her husband."

"You do her wrong to say so," replied Etienne, with some animation; "degraded as I have since become, I could feel for her sufferings then, and pity them from my very soul."

"You were in love with the Marchesa, yourself," exclaimed Cartouche; "but a cup of brandy, my boys." The bottle was passed round, and Etienne, notwithstanding the violence of his emotion, drank off a bumper, and proceeded.

"Months passed on: what spell it was that kept me at the castle, I cannot now understand: to be sure, I was a friendless boy, and, as it was, I could not tear myself away.

"The Marchese di Carrara altered not one

iota in his resolution ; whenever his unfortunate wife entreated him to answer her prayers, if he would not have her he had sworn to cherish and protect, become a maniac, and give her, if not liberty, at least the society which heaven denies to few : he drew from his bosom the English watch, which he always carried about him, and sternly and silently presented it to her eyes.

" He appeared to have a demoniacal pleasure in endeavouring to impress on her mind that her hours were numbered on the dial !

" By an indirect communication, I contrived to make the Marchesa's family acquainted with the frightful situation in which she was dragging on her miserable existence ; but they, rigidly following the dictates of what they styled Italian honour, contented themselves with expressing their sympathy with the husband, whom they deemed an injured person ; and the poor victim was left to die, unaided, and alone.

" Nearly twelve months after our removal to the old castle, I chanced one day to be walking

near a ruined turret, when I heard a low moaning sound, somewhat resembling the mournful cooing of a dove, which I imagined to proceed from a narrow fissure, about twenty feet from the ground, in the castle wall. I listened again —it was continued, sometimes faster, sometimes slower, but always beginning with a deep-drawn sigh, and after becoming louder and more passionate, subsiding again into a breathless whisper. And so it went on, and on, while I stood fearing, dreading, to believe what I knew, and felt, it must be. The mind of my poor mistress had fled for ever! Yes; even in that vacant moan, her senses were winging their way, and leaving behind the clay they had adorned to linger on, to suffer, to endure. In the agony of the moment I fervently prayed that she might die.

"My first effort was to reach the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and to satisfy myself that it communicated, in some way, with the Marchesa's apartments. This I accomplished by climbing, boy-like, up the branches of the

aged vine which spread itself around the turret; the fissure had evidently been caused by time, but enlarged for the purpose of admitting a small quantity of light and air, into a little passage which divided the two rooms occupied by the Marchesa. I called her by name; I assured her I had discovered a means of communication; I implored her to speak—to answer me. It was too late! Again came the same despairing moan! *She had lost the power of speech.*

"Grieved, deeply grieved as I was, imagine my horror, when, turning to descend, I saw the Marchese di Carrara standing on the terrace, gazing on my movements with a hideous scowl; presently, overcome by frantic passion, he drew a pistol from his vest, and pulled the trigger—a heavy numbing blow assailed the fleshy part of my arm, beneath the shoulder, the blood saturated my sleeve, and trickled down on my wrist; I felt faint and sick, and with great difficulty descended, grasping the branches with

one hand, while the other arm was hanging from me disabled.

"Smarting under a severe wound, I yet dreaded the ferocity of my master too much to dare to exhibit my resentment; he, however, sent for surgical assistance; but I still wear a terrible scar of the pistol-shot, with which, he said, he had deservedly punished my insatiable curiosity.

"Notwithstanding the rebuff I had received, so intensely was my interest excited, that whenever I could with certainty depend on my master's absence, I returned to the spot to endeavour if possible, to break the silence which had pressed too strongly on the brain of the unfortunate Marchesa; but I never saw her, never heard her speak. I learnt from the old woman who sometimes attended her (and with whom I had become a favourite in this solitary place), that her lady ate of the food presented to her almost ravenously: had regained her brilliancy of eye, but remained stretched on the couch,

alike regardless in light and in darkness, and moaned despairingly and unceasingly. Another spring and summer came;—and one bright day I listened for the voice * * * *

"She was dead!

"That night I fled from the castle, I cared not whither, so that I might escape from the presence of the Marchese di Carrara; I left him with my pockets almost penniless, rather than ask for the wages which were my due; and tried, in a wandering life, to banish the recollections constantly recurring to me.

"But, I afterwards heard, accidentally, that this paragon of husbands had shown an affectionate regard for his wife's soul, even when he had so cruelly destroyed her mind. The rites of the church were administered with the utmost solemnity and pomp, and a sum of money was paid to a neighbouring monastery of large revenues, for masses for the salvation of the unfortunate Marchesa di Carrara."

"And that is all you have to acquaint us with,

respecting your first ladye-love?" said Cartouche. "It is a cursed melancholy tale."

"There is still an appendage to my story," replied Etienne, "but that you shall have another time—but, gentlemen, permit me to make a remark—here we are, four as agreeable fellows as any in Paris (and what they do without us I cannot tell.) We have wine, viands—cards—conversation, all in a deserted kiln—*tiled*. Is there not another paramount want?—Gentlemen, that paramount want, is, female society—female—female. What is common male society?"

"Why," said Ferrand, "it consists of two separate classes; those who have more dinners than appetite, and those who have more appetite than dinners."

"What is it then that imparts the charming social perfection? why—the admixture of our rougher material with the feminine softness: by all the saints I will not reside twelve

hours longer in this sanctuary, unless we have a party of ladies to visit us."

"But women cannot hold their tongues," Cartouche remarked, "and our snug retreat would soon be blown. A secret should be kept as a secret, and neither be entrusted to a fool, nor to a wise man, nor even to a friend; for a fool can conceal nothing; a wise man is not *always* wise, and a friend may change."

After much discussion, it was agreed that the landlord of *Le Pistolet* (one of the confederates of the associated rogues), should go to Paris, and seek some of the ladies of their acquaintance; and the same landlord undertook to bring them over in a coach: and before they should be permitted to enter the subterraneous passage, leading from the cellar to the tile-kiln sanctuary, the female visitors were to be hood-winked. The landlord was also charged to bring plenty of Champagne and Burgundy, truffled fowls, perigord pies, and any other dainties of the season, the good city afforded.

When he had departed with a well-provided purse on this interesting, confidential, and delicate errand, Etienne, at the request of his comrades, continued his story.

" It is needless to relate to you, my friends, how or why I became a professor of *translation*. It is not necessary to affirm whether it was the result of idleness, debauchery, or misery. It is enough that I lived for some years by taking by violence or stratagem that which the world would not give of its own accord. But this crime, like many others, needs only to be committed on a *large scale* to find impunity.

" Where business is done in a little way, there is always danger, for the great thieves punish the little ones, as the large fish devour the small.

" Seven years after I quitted the service of the Marchese di Carrara, I was at a gaming house in Naples, and had been a winner. On my going into the street for fresh air, one of the games-

ters followed me to the door; and, laying his hand on my shoulder, he said'—

"'Surely I recollect your features:—you do not remember mine, then? But I am altered in frame and health.'

"I gazed at him steadfastly. Care had marked his visage in strong traces."

"'Your name,' said he, 'is Etienne—you were formerly page to ——. Alas! tell me the fate of your unhappy mistress, for I have listened to rumours that have almost driven me mad—I who was the wretched cause of all!'

"'Monsieur Vernon!' I exclaimed, for I now recognised the once handsome Englishman—'I had almost feared that the revenge of the Marchese di Carrara had destroyed your life."

"'The monstrous villain,' ejaculated Vernon, 'on the fatal night that I was introduced to the beautiful Marchesa, in an interval of the dance, I took out my watch to see the hour: the Marchesa admired its neatness and novelty of form.

"'At this moment, the jealous di Carrara was

observing the conference, invisible to me; the Marchesa turning her head, beheld her husband gazing at her with a terrible glance.

"'Blushing, and unhappy at the cruel surmise of the Marchese, she hastily begged of me to leave her, and select another partner in the ball.'

"At a late hour in the morning when the revellers separated, the Englishman, who had taken wine freely, came to me, I holding the post of page, and drawing me aside, gave me a watch, directing me to present it to my mistress, as a memento of the agreeable evening he had passed in her house: he added, that he would take no denial, and he should be on the route to his own country on the following day.

"I delivered the watch to the *fille de chambre* of the Marchesa.

"It was difficult, indeed, to recognise in the *blasé* and ruined gambler, the young fresh-coloured Englishman, who seven years before, had started on his travels, with such joyous hopes.

"'I know that she is dead!' exclaimed Vernon; 'the air is suffocating—let us get closer to the sea-side: tell me, when and how she died?'

"'Most miserably, most wretchedly,' I answered; 'her body outlived her mind.'

"The Englishman turned from me; his emotion was too powerful for utterance. After a long pause, he resumed:

"'You made a remark on the revenge of Carrara: I have twice escaped assassination most miraculously, once in Florence, and again in Paris. A tall man aimed at my heart with a stiletto, while I was inspecting the sepulchre of Michael Angelo, at Santa Croce. A sudden turn, perfectly accidental, caused the knife to dash against the railing which surrounds the tomb, and the blade was shivered with the force of the blow that was intended for me. The villain escaped, undiscovered. Subsequently, walking on Montmartre, in the dusk of the evening, a bullet

passed through my hat, at the same moment that I heard the report of a pistol.'

"Monsieur Vernon then told me, that he ascribed the whole misfortunes of his life, to that one fatal evening: that he had been devoured by a hopeless passion; had become careless to everything on earth, save the gaming table and the bottle. That he had utterly ruined himself; and death would now be welcome to him; and for some time past, he had felt a presentiment that he had not long to remain in this world.

"And, most wonderful to relate, this presentiment was not unfounded, for three days after poor Vernon was discovered murdered in his bed—stabbed—his throat frightfully cut—and the English watch fastened to his breast!

"On my calling at the lodging where he dwelt, I first gained these fatal tidings: and on beholding the mutilated body of the poor Englishman, such had been the diabolical accuracy of the revengeful spirit of the assassin, that the hands of

the watch were stopped to the hour and minute that the Marchese de Carrara first beheld the attentions of Vernon to his unhappy wife."

"That is an accursed melancholy story," said Ferrand. "By way of beguiling part of the time till the women and eatables arrive, I will relate an accident that befel me prior to my entering the profession."

Ferrand was rather inclined to the obese in figure, although a good-looking little fellow; and he very much enjoyed his own anecdote, which, it must be premised, told somewhat against himself. "Messieurs," he commenced, "have either of you ever been tarred and feathered?"

On the gentlemen replying in the negative.

"Well, then, I have;" continued Ferrand.

"It must have been a most agreeable operation to the sensations," remarked Cartouche.

"Extremely," said Ferrand. "When I was a plump lad, rather precocious for my years, my heart was so easily inflamed that I fell head

over tip in love with every female I met. I resided in the neighbourhood of St. Brieux, in the Côtes du Nord, and was engaged first as gardener, and afterwards as courier, to the Count de St. Brieux.

"The Counts de St. Brieux had been singularly situated for a century and a half: although they were the landed proprietors, they had gradually become connected with the large associated band of free-traders and smugglers that swarmed in this department of France. My master, then about twenty-four years of age, finding that some suspicions were harboured against him by the government, went to Paris, boldly to show and justify himself; while there, he fell in love with a lovely young woman of good family, to whom he was shortly after united. A lovely boy blessed this union; and St. Brieux would have been perfectly happy had he not thought of the dark home of his forefathers, and his lawless associates, whose secret agents now insisted on his return to his

estate. The Count was forced, very much against his will, to quit Paris; he was accompanied by the Countess, her infant, and a female domestic, besides myself, who had lately entered his service. The Count de St. Brieux had so far insinuated himself into the good graces of the government authorities, that as proprietor of the tract of country, they appointed him to a command, and gave him power to embody his own tenantry as an armed force against the smugglers and pirates. He decidedly was placed in a difficult position, for on his estate he had been enchained in the toils of remorseless ruffians who lived by fraud and plunder."

"Gently, gently, my good Sir," said Cartouche. "Recollect the delicate nerves of certain persons in company."

"Well," continued Ferrand, "they did not consider themselves exactly in that light; they and their predecessors had been driven to this mode of life by the oppressions of famine, and provincial tax-gatherers. And although the

Count was their leader, it was with bitter mortification that he felt that he was irrecovably their slave. And he had now, moreover, to wear a double mask.

"When the travelling carriage that contained our party arrived at our inn at Dol, and my master and mistress were taking some refreshment, I went into a sort of public garden attached to the tavern, where I saw a number of people seated at tables, drinking and smoking. I joined them, although, to me, they had a motley appearance. Presently one rough-looking fellow, glancing fiercely at me, poured out a glass of rum, and gave as a toast, 'Success to Free Trade.' He desired me to drink it. I accordingly, somewhat overawed, drank, 'Success to Free Trade,' observing, that I supposed I must abide by their customs.

"'Confusion to all customs,' said my new friend.

"'Softly, Monsieur,' said I, in my innocence, 'I cannot hear that toast drunk.'

" 'Drunk or sober, I repeat it,' replied the fellow; 'confusion to all customs.'

" A tall person in a hairy cap, approached me, and pulling out a pistol, said, 'Who, and what are you? a spy, eh!'

" As I, in early days, had a great aversion to fire-arms, I exclaimed, 'Monsieur, I do not presume to know the point of my offence; is it intended as a compliment to me, or are you going to fire a salute on my arrival? I have the honour to be the courier of the Count de St. Brieux.'

" They all seemed astonished at this, and more so, when I informed them that the Count, and Countess, and a little Count, about a foot long, had arrived. Presently, by way of keeping up all our dignity, I told them that the Count de St. Brieux had been appointed to the command of a corps which was to be raised to scour the whole country of the desperate gangs of smugglers. This set them all chattering in every direction, and they stared when I advised that such

poor devils should take care of themselves, for they would assuredly be cut up, root and branch.

"Well, soon after this, fresh horses were put to the travelling carriage, and on we went to the château—a fine old melancholy looking building—where we were welcomed by a handsome young lady, a sister of the Count, who made much of my mistress and the little boy, to both of whom she was now for the first time introduced.

"The sister, who was named Clarice, had recently arrived at the château, from a convent, where she had been educated; and she, of course, found her bachelor brother's dwelling frightfully out of order.

"I went below to what was called the servants' hall, and was not a little astonished at the scene which now took place; seated in a wicker arm-chair, was an elderly cross-grained-looking female, who had officiated, for many years, as the housekeeper of the château de St. Brieux.

" Presently Mademoiselle came into the servants' hall, to inquire of Jacqueline, the housekeeper, why the coffee was not ready, and where were the servants ?

" Mademoiselle did not see me, at the moment, and she said, ' Where is your husband ?'

" ' What is my husband to you ?' replied Jacqueline, with a harsh tone of voice ; ' he is out on *business ;* not yet returned from the last expedition.'

" ' Well,' said Mademoiselle Clarice, ' this is an odd reception for the Countess de St. Brieux.'

" ' The Countess will soon become accustomed to us,' remarked the housekeeper ; ' and if she does not like us, why, she can leave us.'

" ' But what expedition do you mean, Jacqueline ?'

" ' You are of the house of St. Brieux, and ought to know,' said the crusty old woman, and she winked at Clarice. ' Rum, tea, Salisbury

flannel, knives and forks, cotton stockings, and other forbidden fruit.'

"This dialogue rather surprised me; I made no remark, but the scales were taken a little more off my eyes, when, an hour afterwards, I suddenly stopped in the ante-chamber of the Count's apartment, on hearing voices. I could see distinctly into the room, and was thunderstruck on beholding the person who presented the pistol at my head at Dol, in the hairy cap, now attired as a steward. He suddenly exclaimed—

"'St. Brieux.'

"'Your master, Sir, still,' replied the Count, his eyes flashing with indignation.

"'Harkye, St. Brieux,' said the steward, 'what devil's web have you been weaving, for the last two years, in Paris?'

"'I scorn to reply to your insolence.'

"'You received my message?' inquired the steward.

"'Yes, and am come hither to answer it—to face my accusers.'

"'That must be done immediately, most noble Count,' said the steward, sarcastically, 'nay, this very night; all the confederated free-traders have been summoned at twelve o'clock to-night, in the great store cavern in the quarry—you may have an object in staying away; but if you do not come—'

"'Well, sirrah?'

"The steward looked at the Count like a fiend, and hinted that his newly-married wife, and the infant hope, would probably be burned in their beds.

"The Countess at this moment appeared from an inner room, with the sweet little baby in her arms.

"The steward, in a hypocritical tone, bowing low to the Count, said, 'Our good master perhaps will condescend immediately to answer his humble servant, on the important question just now submitted to him?'

"'I am undecided,' replied St. Brieux, haughtily.

"The steward paced several steps towards the door, and continued in the same tone, 'then I will see to *the lighting of the fire* in the Countess's bed-chamber myself.'

"The Count, in an accent of subdued agony, exclaimed, 'Stay, stay, Monsieur Martin, I shall attend the appointment.'

"Monsieur Martin, the steward, quitted the room.

"I had heretofore imagined that I could have given myself some credit for penetration, but here I was baffled in any attempt to account for such conduct from a servant to a superior; and I had ever found the Count de St. Brieux a kind master.

"Presently I had an opportunity of a private conversation with Sofie, the favourite maid of the Countess, and who had nursed her little son. She was amiable, and I had lost my heart to her. Such a divinity of a *soubrette*—fair skin,

dark hair, plump figure, white teeth, small hands and feet, arched eyebrows, sparkling eyes, coral lips, charming bust, easy carriage, such a—"

"Hold, hold!" cried Cartouche, "desist further description: what a devil of a time our female visitors are on the road!"

Ferrand apologised if he had been too glowing in his description, but continued his narration:—

"'My sweet,' said I to Sofie, 'as I hope to be united to you in the mellifluous bonds of wedlock, hear and believe me. We are in a confounded scrape in this château—master, mistress, baby, and all.'

"'Pooh! pooh! Monsieur Ferrand,' said she.

"'Well!' I went on, 'have you seen any of the people who live here?'

"'Yes,' she replied, 'there is a Monsieur Martin, who I understand is the house-steward, so nice and respectable-looking a person, that I took him for the curate.'

"'You took him for the curate,' sighed I; 'ah! Sofie, I wish you had been a police-officer.'

"Sofie inquired, 'why?'

"'You would have taken him for a thief! He has already presented a pistol to my head.'

"'Ferrand, are you deranged?' kindly inquired my lovely Sofie.

"'I assure you, my dear Sofie,' said I, 'we are in a horde of Calmuc Tartars.'

"But Sofie remained incredulous: she was a sharp-witted and courageous girl, and I had talked to her enough to arouse her curiosity. So she watched all the movements attentively, and was surprised at the strange freedom with which the Count was treated by the domestics of the château.

"Soon after the Countess had taken her coffee she became very drowsy, and finding she could not keep her eyes open, the Count de St. Brieux begged Clarice to shew her sister-in-law to her bed-chamber, imagining his dear wife to be overcome with fatigue: Sofie conveyed her

precious charge, the infant heir of St. Brieux, up stairs, with its mother. She was then sent down for a mantle her mistress had left below. And, as she was crossing a room, she heard Monsieur Martin and Jacqueline conversing together in a low tone; Sofie stood for a minute behind a high-backed old-fashioned chair, when she distinctly heard the steward say, 'I shall give St. Brieux another strong hint to be punctual to his appointment: the Countess has dropped off to sleep.' 'Yes,' replied Jacqueline, 'I took good care of that; I put enough of laudanum into her coffee to keep her ladyship quiet during the absence of her husband.' They then glided through a door, and disappeared.

"Sofie became seriously alarmed at thus overhearing that an opiate had been administered to her mistress, and she was reflecting how she should act, when the Count de St. Brieux crossed the room with an air of anxiety and irresolution.

"She accordingly made up her mind to

watch her master; and, as he went out, to follow him secretly at any hazard.

"He descended to the garden by a small door that led from one of the turrets; Sofie from the staircase beheld him go down a long walk in the garden, and turn by a path to the right; she rapidly and silently followed. Presently she saw her master approach a wooden obelisk in a remote part of the shrubbery. It was moonlight, and Sofie had some difficulty in keeping her own figure concealed. The Count then appeared to touch a spring, and the obelisk was lowered gradually and horizontally, then an aperture was visible, into which the Count de St. Brieux stepped, and descending, soon disappeared.

"Sofie ventured up to the spot; and a staircase down this sort of trap-door presenting itself to her sight, she boldly followed the direction the Count had taken. At the bottom of the stairs was a passage dimly lighted, and here Sofie heard hoarse voices; she determined now

to discover the mystery, and walking hastily on, at the end of the passage she stopped as she beheld a singular scene.

"And this was a spacious cavern which had the appearance of having been an ancient stone quarry; pillars of which, cut into rude and grotesque forms, supported the roof, if it could be so called: on a closer inspection, by the light of several lamps, were discernable large bales of merchandise, casks, and wooden cases. A number of strange-looking people were assembled in this curious place of meeting, and to which, it appeared, the Count had a distinct and private entrance.

"Sofie saw her master take his seat amongst these persons, most of them having weather-beaten, sea-faring countenances, but all of which were overcast with the gloom of discontent.

"On silence being obtained, the Count de St. Brieux arose, and said:—

"'How is this, my friends; no word of welcome?'

"Martin, the steward, faced the Count, and replied gruffly, 'What sort of welcome does a burrow of rabbits give to the ferret?'

"'Will Monsieur Martin condescend to speak more intelligibly?' asked St. Brieux.

"'I intend it,' exclaimed Martin; 'we will have it all out now.'

"Here the mob joined in boisterously, and cried out, 'Aye, aye, let us have the truth: no skulkers!'

"Martin fixed his grey eyes on the Count, and said—

"'St. Brieux, we have had our spies upon you during your absence; you have quitted your associates for twenty-four months; you are now summoned into the presence of the United Free Traders, with whom you and your family have been closely connected for a hundred and fifty years!'

"'Moderate your tone, Monsieur Martin,' interrupted the Count. 'I am as deeply attached as ever to the old cause.'

"'What was it then,' inquired the steward, 'that required your presence daily in the antechamber of the Minister of the Exchequer at Paris? Would your brave father, or grandfather, have been seen sneaking about the purlieus of office, when they could boldly, by open defiance, enrich themselves and their comrades.'

"Here the smugglers tumultously shouted, 'No, no, never!'

"'Explain, Count de St. Brieux,' said Martin.

"'Without difficulty,' replied the Count. 'As a politic measure, to blind the suspicions of government, I, the proprietor of a large tract of country here, have solicited, aye, and have obtained, an important command against the pirates and smugglers.

"'Hear me! I have actual authority to arm and embody my own tenantry; you are my tenantry: in fact, I have compassed the enormous object of being enabled to lead you all—against yourselves!'

"A likely story, indeed,' said Martin; 'then how happens it that a strong detachment of the Government troops have come into the country by forced marches, and are encamped about four leagues distant? answer that. Count de St. Brieux, you have betrayed us: to make your own peace with the authorities you intend to give us up to justice. How unlike the conduct of your noble father; he never flinched from our cause, but lived and died a glorious, a magnificent old smuggler. To be sure, they hanged him one morning, but what of that?

"'Villain!' exclaimed the Count; 'do not provoke me: once aroused, I can become as fierce a fiend as any of ye. I dare ye to say or prove, that I have been unfaithful to your cause! The liar that utters it shall receive a bullet in his brain!'

"Here St. Brieux drew a pistol from his bosom; upon which Martin quickly produced a brace, which he cocked, coolly remarking, 'There are more can play at that game,

and the slugs sometimes crawl about in this cavern.'

"Sofie was suddenly alarmed, and shrieked involuntarily. The smugglers paused for a moment to ascertain from whence the sound proceeded. Sofie was greatly relieved when Martin said it must have been an owl, or some night-bird.

"'Listen to me,' continued St. Brieux. 'Your cowardly accusations are as absurd as they are unfounded; I am in your power; what would you have more?'

"'Good and ample security,' said Martin.

"'My treasures are already in your hands,' exclaimed the Count.

"'Look ye, St. Brieux,' replied his adversary, 'you never cared for money, so your treasure is no guarantee. Come, come, I think I have hit on a mode to satisfy all parties; yes, nothing can be more just, fair, and above-board.'

"'I care not what pledge you may require—speak on,' said the Count.

"'Good! good! St. Brieux, during your absence from your estate and dependents, you have become a father. The infant is doubtless dear to you, very dear to its mother; but that child must be put into our own possession as a pledge of its parent's fidelity, until the troops are removed from the province.'

"The Count shuddered.

"'You cannot form an objection to this proposal,' continued the malignant Martin. 'The pretty puppet shall be well taken care of; we will send it over to be nursed in the island of Guernsey. Nothing can be better than this plan, because no harm can come to the child as long as you are a true man; but if, on the contrary, you betray us, the infant heir of St. Brieux can be tied up in an old fishing net, and thrown over the cliff into the sea, without any one being the wiser.'

"St. Brieux became furious; but he was overpowered, and compelled to withdraw. Martin, on parting with him, said, 'It is useless

preaching; you know our resolve, and YOU KNOW US: the child must be put in our charge to-morrow night. Farewell, Count.'

"As the meeting broke up, Sofie rushed along the passage, up the steps into the garden, regained the turret-door, and her own room undiscovered."

CHAPTER XXI.

FERRAND CONTINUES HIS ADVENTURE—TAR AND FEATHERS —THE HEIR OF A NOBLE HOUSE SAVED—ARRIVAL AT CLICHY OF FEMALE SOCIETY FROM THE METROPOLIS— —CARTOUCHE RECOGNISES SOME OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

Ferrand, after refreshing himself with a tumbler of wine, proceeded with his narrative. "Sofie, as I have informed you, was a girl of spirit and courage; moreover, she was very fond of the little boy, and she instantly made up her mind that he should not fall into the hands of the free-traders, let the consequence be what it might. She went up stairs, and saw a smile playing around the pretty mouth of the infant; she vowed to the Virgin to abide by her determination.

"She would not alarm her mistress, by telling her what she had seen; in fact, it would in all probability have endangered her life, as she was of delicate constitution.

"Martin returned to the château, and held long conferences with Jacqueline, commanding her to watch the motions of Sofie and myself, circumspectly. There was something very mysterious about Sofie all the next day, and I pressed her to tell me what was the matter; but I could not get a word out of her, excepting that she inquired what money I had in my possession, as she wanted to borrow it of me. I thought this odd; but as I knew her to be a girl of very honest principles, I gave her all my little stock of savings. She then told me to keep out of her way during the day, but at nine o'clock at night, to be at the door of the turret in the garden, where there was something to be done which was, indeed, a matter of life or death. I made many inquiries, but she refused to satisfy my curiosity, so I quitted her in a

pet, but I swore by St. Anthony that I would keep the appointment at nine o'clock.

"Monsieur Martin took every opportunity to insult me; and as the Count de St. Brieux was absent the whole day under the pretext of being compelled to survey a distant part of his estate, I walked out, and strolled in the direction of the village on the sea-shore; there, sitting, singing, and making and mending fishing nets, were a number of the females I had noticed in the garden of the tavern at Dol, and I had winked at one or two of them, there.

"They were a fine race, with ruddy complexions, bright black eyes, and very white teeth: notwithstanding my real attachment to Sofie, my heart went pit-a-pat at the sight of them.

"I entered into an agreeable chat with them: they were sprightly, but I imagined them to look a little mischievous; three fishing boats now came in, and the men having hauled them up on the beach, sorted the fish, which the

factors on the beach purchased by Dutch auction : the owner of the boat acts as salesman, and names a price above the real value, at the same time elevating a large stone with which to 'knock down' the lot; the auctioneer then rapidly names a lower price, until he gets a bid, when the stone descends to the ground, and the first bidder is thus the purchaser. The best fish are then packed off in light waggons for Paris. While I was watching this lively scene, and talking to the pretty fish-wives, I beheld Martin scowling at me, and in conversation with some of the men.

"When the work was concluded—and many hands made it soon over—I still lingered about the cottages; when, presently, one of the handsomest of the women invited me into the largest dwelling, to have a dance. I was delighted, and immediately accepted the invitation, and which was the more enchanting, because it happened that I was the only male amongst all these amiable creatures.

"I danced the 'fricassee dance' with them alternately, till I was almost tired, while they, with animated spirits, were shouting and screaming with laughter at the top of their voices. It was growing now late, and the women proposed that we should have a game of 'blind-man's buff,' at which I had not played since childhood; but, as I felt myself to be as great a boy as ever, I not only consented to make one in the pastime, but, out of gallantry, being the only gentleman in company, I agreed to be blinded with a handkerchief; then commenced a most agreeable game of romps: I every moment on the point of catching a fish—*woman*, when, suddenly, they were all silent; I groped about, hood-winked, wondering what had become of all these fair creatures, when I came against, and immediately caught, a human being who I thought had rather a large waist for a lady, although a coarse canvass petticoat was worn; the handkerchief that bound my eyes was untied behind, when, instead of the

fifteen women with whom I had been toying, imagine my horror and surprise, when I beheld six great hulking fishermen, or smugglers, some with pistols in their hands—not a female was to be seen or heard. I, recovering from my sudden astonishment, was about to address these maritime gentlemen, when they, in a trice, bound and gagged me, carried me into a shed where boats were repaired—and where I beheld a kettle of pitch. Presently a boy entered with a large bag of turkey and other feathers; upon which these inhuman monsters proceeded to daub me with tar all over; and, when this operation was performed, they actually decorated my person throughout with feathers, roaring with boisterous laughter; the merciless wretches then unbound me, and drove me out into the open air, cautioning me never again to come gallivanting with their wives. I got away as fast as I possibly could from the malicious ruffians, for I was not in a condition either to revenge myself, or laugh with them. I did not know

what to do; I was miserably uncomfortable: they had tarred my hair, and stuck even that with feathers; in fact, I was feathered all over. It was now growing dark, and I hoped to sneak back unperceived to the château, from which I was some distance. I walked stiffly along with my plumes fluttering in the breeze; and the more the wind blew on me, the more stiff I became. The old church clock of St. Brieux now chimed three-quarters past eight, when I suddenly recollected my promise to Sofie. Consider the situation I was in to assist at any undertaking! all pitch and turkey feathers! I could not, by the greatest exertion, regain the château in less than a quarter of an hour, I was, therefore, unable to seize an opportunity to disengage myself from my ridiculous entanglement. I determined, however, to keep my word with my dear Sofie, and bitterly regretted that I had ever suffered myself to be led away by those deceitful mermaids, the accursed fish-women.

"I made my way to the postern at the turret.

UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS LIBRARY

Thank heaven, it was dark; in a moment I heard the voice of Sofie, who, in an under tone, thus addressed me:—

"'Ferrand, Ferrand, is that you?'

"'Yes,' said I, pitching my voice as mild as possible.

"'What a very strong smell of tar!' said she.

"'Is there?' said I, mournfully.

"'Here, my friend, come closer.' I approached her. 'Take this most carefully in your arms; as you hope for mercy from God, do not drop it;' and she placed what I understood to be a bundle in my hands.

"'What is it?' I inquired.

"'Hush!—it is the Countess's baby; It is the only hope I have of saving it.'

"I was thunderstruck!

"'Take it,' continued Sofie, 'quietly and gently, to the *quai* of the Gouet, where, by the side of the bridge, you will see a carriage and horses; get into that with your precious charge, and wait until I join you. I must go again up

stairs, or all will be discovered. Away! away! as you hope for my love: if you fail, I will never see you more!'

"Sofie disappeared.

"Well, was this not a most extraordinary predicament? I, a tarred and feathered courier, surreptitiously eloping with the infant heir of St. Brieux.

"I, however, lost no time in reflection, but with great perseverance, made my way with the dear little baby to the chaise, which I perceived to be drawn up under a wall near the bridge.

"I perceived the driver standing at his horses' heads, playfully tickling their nostrils: so I called to him.

"There was a lighted lanthorn hanging from the wall; but, when the postillion approached me, and caught a sight of my most extraordinary and fiend-like costume, he shrieked with horror, and rushed away, for he most assuredly supposed me to be his Satanic majesty.

"It was in vain that I roared to him; the

louder I roared the faster he ran, and he could not get over the ground very rapidly, although he had his seven leagued boots on.

"So the best thing I thought I could do, would be to place the little sleeping heir of St. Brieux, on the seat of the chaise, and shutting the door, remain on guard, hiding myself in the best way I could, if any passers-by approached before Sofie arrived.

"I attempted to sit down, but there I stuck. I once placed my arm on the back of one of the horses, and we were quickly united, until by main strength I drew myself away, bringing out a portion of his hair, while he retained some of my pitch and feathers.

"At length Sofie came, wrapped up in a travelling cloak, she had provided herself with a bottle of food for the baby, and hastily looking into the chaise to see that the infant was safe, she inquired for the postilion, and, with a glance of intense surprise, surveyed my decorated person.

"I briefly informed her that I had been 'tarred and feathered:' she had not the slightest notion what I meant; I think she fancied that I had dressed myself for a carnival frolic. I told her the postilion had ran away on seeing me; she accordingly went in pursuit of him, but had great difficulty in inducing him to return, and mount his horse, and drive off.

"I had the satisfaction of seeing the carriage go along the Paris road, at a good round trot.

"Previous to leaving me, Sofie put into my hands a letter, which she charged me to deliver to the Countess, myself, in the morning. I confess I was not only greatly astonished at this mysterious behaviour, but became rather alarmed at what might be the consequences of it.

"When I got to the château, I found that Monsieur Martin had been waiting my arrival that he might have a malicious exulting laugh at the accident which had happened to me, so that I was glad to sneak up to my bed-chamber,

and relieve myself of my plumage, &c., as I best could, and I assure you, it was no easy task. By the sneer on the wicked countenance of the steward, I am certain that he was the main cause of my having been delivered into the hands of the Philistines.

"The remaining portion of this adventure I was not acquainted with until some time after, when I again met Sofie. It appeared that the time was closely approaching when the little boy was to be delivered up to the smugglers, and they had a boat ready to convey him to Guernsey. Jacqueline, by the order of Martin, was to take it from its bed at night; Sofie, however, was too much on the alert, and she would not have a confidant in her plan. Count de St. Brieux, I have told you, was absent from home, and he delayed his return purposely to avoid his persecutors, who made so remorseless a demand on his feelings as a father.

"Sofie knew too little of Mademoiselle Clarice to dare to speak to her on the subject;

and the Countess would have lost her senses, had she been aware of the situation she was in. Jacqueline watched her with the sagacity of an old cat, but when Jacqueline saw Sofie take the infant from its mother's side, and carefully convey it to its own bed, she was satisfied; so she drew her chair to the door of the nursery, which was higher up the staircase, and sat down to stocking-knitting, as a guard over her little prisoner—but *this* little prisoner was nothing more than a bundle ingeniously manufactured by Sofie to the size, and attired in the night-clothes of the heir of St. Brieux.

"The real child was already packed in a mantle, on a pillow, asleep, and only had to be silently carried to the door of the turret to be delivered to my charge.

"After I had received it, and carried it away, Sofie, completely to deceive Jacqueline, entered the room, went to the bed, hushed, and talked to the supposed infant, quieted it, and re-passing the old housekeeper, begged of her, *should she*

hear the boy cry, to call her from her mistress's room instantly.

"Sofie then quitted the château, unseen, and joined me, as I have described. She had procured a passport in the morning at the office of the Prefect of St. Brieux, and with her own money, added to that which she had borrowed of me, travelled to the home of her own parents, with her precious little charge. Here, at first, she was received with some suspicion, as her respectable mother found it rather difficult to disbelieve that the pretty baby was not her own. She really imagined that her little grandson was in her presence.

"About twelve o'clock at night, a man and woman were seated in the servants' hall of the château de St. Brieux, for whose arrival Monsieur Martin had been for some time waiting. Both of them were wrapped up in rough boat cloaks; and having partaken of some food and wine, Martin took off his shoes, and ascended the stairs to the story where

Jacqueline was seated. It being past the old woman's usual hours of vigilance, she had fallen asleep. Martin awoke her, and ordered her to fetch the baby; Jacqueline, hardly aroused, went into the room where the supposed infant was lying on the bed in its mantle, lifted it gently up, and carried it to Martin, who conveyed it down stairs; it was then handed over to the female in the boat cloak, who exclaimed, '*Ciel!* although you are born a Count, you are not very heavy.' She was cautioned by Martin to keep it wrapped up warmly; and the Guernsey man and woman left the château, from whence they proceeded at once to the quai, where they got on board a small cutter; and wind and tide being favourable, the sails were trimmed, and off the party sailed for Guernsey, without discovering their mistake.

"After many hours scrubbing, cutting my hair, and picking the tar from my eye-brows, I got myself into tolerably decent order; I went

early in the morning and delivered Sofie's letter to the Countess; she was bewildered at the intelligence, but yet I could perceive that she had a confident reliance on Sofie, though she became quite lost in uneasy conjecture, shed many tears, and her inquiries for her infant were incoherent.

"At this moment Count de St. Brieux returned to the château, and, going up to his wife's apartment, found her in great grief—he was evidently much depressed himself in spirit. The letter of Sofie was shewn to him, at which, at first, his eyes brightened up: then again he reflected, how could Sofie have possibly become acquainted with the secret, had she been false to her precious charge, and carried the little hostage to the free-traders? Of one thing he felt certain, that so long as Sofie had the boy in her possession, he would be well taken care of. Beseeching his wife to hope everything for the best, he descended to the library, and rang the bell for Monsieur Martin.

"'Where is my boy?'

"'Consigned, with a careful nurse, last night to Guernsey, according to agreement.'

"'But I never agreed to such a measure,' said the Count.

"'But the Free-Traders did,' coldly replied Martin.

"'Martin,' continued the Count, 'if a hair of that child's head is hurt, by the God that made me, I will get you hanged, if I die for it myself.'

"'If one swings all must swing,' remarked Martin; 'you can tell the Countess that no harm shall befal the little Count, unless you should happen to forget old times, and betray us.'

"'Leave me, Sir.'

"The Count de St. Brieux was now in a still greater state of doubt and perplexity: he ordered me into his presence, and fastening the door of his library that we might not be overheard, he inquired whether I knew anything

about Sofie? I told him the part I had taken in the mysterious affair, without adverting to the tarring and feathering which I considered irrevelant to the case.

"'And how dared you, sirrah, to aid and abet so shameful and cowardly an abduction?' said St. Brieux.

"'Monsieur le Comte,' I replied, 'Sofie did not communicate her plans to me, but she told me it was a case of life and death!"

"'And is my poor boy conveyed to Guernsey?' inquired the Count.

"'Sofie went away in a post-chaise on the Paris road, with a passport—I saw her and the baby off safely.'

"The Count now fully made up his mind that the girl had somehow or other acquired a knowledge of the predicament in which he stood, and of the intention of the smugglers; and had determined at any risk to keep the infant out of their clutches. He was therefore much more easy at heart, though he had considerable

difficulty in making explanations to the Countess, to whom all was perplexed mystery.

"The Count again sent for me, and inquired if either Jacqueline or Martin knew that I had been in communication with Sofie and the little boy? I replied, 'I was quite certain that they did not.'

"'We will then keep our own secret,' said St. Brieux, 'and, for the present, leave the rest to fate.'

"I now saw an evident surprise on the part of old Jacqueline and Martin, as to the sudden removal of Sofie from the château, but they supposed that the Count had purposely sent her out of the way, on the abduction of the heir of St. Brieux as a hostage."

At this part of Ferrand's curious story, the landlord tapped at the entrance of the tile-kiln, and announced that Mesdames had arrived from Paris.

Cartouche, Etienne, Dumesnil, and Ferrand were instantly on their legs, and attempting to

put their room in order, hiding any litter that might have been made by a bachelor-party, and removing everything that might shock a female eye: for the ladies had come on their visit. When all was to-rights, Cartouche gave orders that the ladies should be introduced. Presently appeared at the door, wondering where they had got, and like four timid doe-rabbits—Madame Thibault au Dé, the sham Countess de Bergerac, and Mion de Boule, who had been discharged from prison, arm in arm with Douce Esperance. At the sight of these old friends, Cartouche expressed his perfect delight, and vowed that their party, at any rate, should be a merry one.

"Madame Thibault au Dé, I am rejoiced to see you; I trust that Monsieur, my friend, is in excellent health?"

The lady regretted to state that Monsieur Thibault had not been visible for a considerable period: indeed, she was not exactly aware in what part of France he had taken up his present

abode, for having felt it to be his duty as a husband (on the breaking up of their establishment, when she lost her little all) to refit her wardrobe completely, he had been unfortunately detected, and was compelled to fly.

Cartouche now turned to the false Countess, and said, "My lovely de Bergerac, permit me to salute you; you are somewhat thinner than when I last had the pleasure to see you, but you are still a captivating creature."

The Countess wondered who in the devil's name ever got fat in the *cachôt?* Did jailors imagine that their inmates grew corpulent by licking their paws, as bears are said to do during the winter!

Cartouche thought that the Countess's style of conversation had not improved during her sojourn in the Conciergerie.

Mion de Boule and Douce Esperance having been warmly embraced by Cartouche, were asked in what line they practised now, seeing that they no longer had youth in their favour?

Mion de Boule replied that they had taken to fortune-telling, which brought them in a very genteel income.

The landlord of *Le Pistolet* now entered to spread the table-cloth, and lay the folded napkins; he brought in all the delicacies he could purchase in Paris. Partridge pies, truffled turkey, pine-apple jelly, Fontainbleau grapes, Champagne, Burgundy, *fromage de* Roquefort, &c., &c., &c., to which the whole party in the tile-kiln did ample justice, particularly the ladies who were recently out of their confinement. The Champagne had its usual effect of setting the female tongues in motion, and even prim and puckered old Douce Esperance chatted away with vivacity. She, smilingly, informed Cartouche that since she had last had the pleasure to be in his society, she had narrowly escaped being burnt for a witch.

The gentlemen having expressed some curiosity to hear the particulars, Madame Douce Esperance, entreating their patience, began as follows:—

"When I was thrown upon my own resources, on the *smash* at Monsieur Thibault au Dé's apartments, I was soon discharged from custody, because the police could not prove anything against me, beyond my being found on the premises. So, I started business on my own account, and undertook (in a quiet way of course), to discover property which had been lost, by supernatural means. It is astonishing how soon my reputation was made, for I had two boys whom I constantly employed to pilfer: the stolen articles were hidden in certain places; and after my incantations, for which I was paid, the property was sure to be discovered by my art, and returned to the rightful owners. My fame increased, daily; but I was compelled to be very cautious, for the laws against witchcraft were in full force: I had a few ready-made musty sayings, which I put off on all occasions with an air of great mystery; such as 'good lady, if you are about to buy anything, and when you should pay for it, cannot find your

purse, it is the worst omen that can happen, and unlucky for your marketing.'

"'Much rain is a certain sign of wet weather.'

"'Three of the best things in the world, are very odious to three sorts of people; health to physicians, peace to soldiers, and sincerity to lawyers!'

"'An eclipse of the sun is the noblest eclipse, and denotes that he will be darkened while it lasts!'

"'The full moon signifies that she can hold no more, and this is a certain rule!'

"It was quite wonderful the effect these little truisms bad on the ladies who came to consult me.

"A knock at the door of my attic introduced to me a female much more elegantly attired than the generality of my visitors. I had my hour-glass, a globe, and a book of pot-hooks and hangers, by way of hieroglyphics, and a black cat on the table.

"The lady paid me a fee, and then, after binding me to secresy, informed me that she was the Marchioness de la Musanchére, that the Chevalier de Pruyon had paid his addresses to her, and she loved him passionately; but she had latterly made a fatal discovery, that the Chevalier was false to her, and had come to the resolution of marrying another lady, Mademoiselle Daillé, and that, to avoid the importunities of the Marchioness, Monsieur de Pruyon all at once left off visiting her, as she had, as a matter of course, endeavoured to frustrate the marriage.

"The Marchioness de la Musanchére, afflicted by the loss of her lover, and not knowing how to reclaim his attention, took it into her head to consult me, on hearing that I was celebrated for recovering stolen property—the Chevalier being considered as a precious object belonging to her, by the right of long possession. On the promise of a liberal reward, I undertook to re-

store the Chevalier to her, as much in love as ever."

Here Madame Thibault au Dé and little Bergerac put their fingers very significantly to their noses.

"Why," continued Douce Esperance, "I certainly intended to make a good profit out of the credulity of the forsaken Marchioness, so I demanded money to buy the costly drugs necessary for enchantments and love-spells; as well as a thousand yards of white satin ribbon, which I told her was to be extended from one house to another, to serve as a medium of communication.

"A night was appointed for the commencement of my magical operations, and I was privately introduced into the apartment of the Marchioness; the waiting maids had retired, all the wax lights were extinguished, and a lamp was substituted, whose feeble glimmering in a large chamber, was scarcely sufficient to make the surrounding objects visible.

"I then burnt some drugs in a chafing-dish, which produced a thick smoke, and having ordered the Marchioness partially to undress herself, I poured over her certain ointments, repeating at the same time a long string of enchantments.

"I pushed my game a little too far; for the darkness and the smoke, and the extraordinary language I made use of, combined with the idea of being alone, and half undressed, at midnight, with a sorceress, made such an impression on the mind of the Marchioness, that she fell into convulsions, and uttered such screams, as alarmed the whole house; the servants ran up, the door was broken open, and, before the Marchioness was restored, I was handed over to the watch. I was carried before a commissioner of police, who, instead of smothering up the silly affair, condemned me to stand for three hours in the pillory; a proceeding which occasioned the greatest scandal, for I, poor devil, having no-

thing to risk, and wishing to exculpate myself from the imputation of sorcery, bethought myself to entertain the people around me with the history of the amours of the Marchioness and her lover, adding many anecdotes relative to other ladies of the city, for whom she had been a mediatrix. The magistrate, whose duty it was to witness my punishment, presently happening to hear the name of his own wife mentioned among the others, instantly put a stop to my discourse, by ordering me to be taken out of the pillory, or all the intrigues of Paris would have been fully exposed.

"My *ruse* had the desired effect, for I got off after a week's imprisonment; when, if I had not acted with such ingenuity, I might have suffered the same fate as Joan of Arc."

The conclave in the tile-kiln applauded the genius of Douce Esperance, and each, and all, pledged her in a bumper. Songs from Madame Thibault au Dé, and cotillions by the whole

party carried on affairs pleasantly until long past midnight; when it was agreed that they should separate, and the ladies were to take up their quarters, until next day, in the hotel of *Le Pistolet*, where they all slept in one bed.

CHAPER XXII.

THE LADY-VISITORS MORALISE—AND RETIRE TO REST—A FOUR-POST BED—THE DEMON UNDERTAKER RE-APPEARS, WHICH CAUSES THE DISLODGEMENT OF CARTOUCHE—CARTOUCHE JOURNEYS TO ENGLAND; AND HAVING LOST HIS CHARACTER, FINDS A NEW ONE.

It does not matter at what hour ladies retire to rest after a party, rout, or ball, or how fatigued they may be, they never are so sufficiently tired but they can have a good talk before they go to sleep. In fact, it is a doubt whether they could possibly drop into slumber without it.

Consequently, the lady-visitors to the tile-kiln were no exception to the general rule. De Bergerac vowed that Monsieur Cartouche had wonderfully improved in appearance, while Madame Thibault au Dé considered that neither

Dumesnil nor Ferrand were ill-looking, if they could have divested themselves a little, of their impudence; as for Etienne, he was *un homme de néant*.

"What a Providence it is, that these four fellows have not hitherto been hanged," said Mion de Boule, "they are undoubtedly the most deserving men in Paris."

"Oh, do not take away their reputations," interrupted Madame Thibault. "But after all, my dears, what is reputation?"

Douce Esperance now put in her spoke; "Reputation is a bell, which the least accident will crack, and whose sound dies away almost as soon as it is heard."

"Talking of reputation," said Madame Thibault, "I met, yesterday, with a man who is reckoned to have the hardest heart in all France. I was calling on old Rebecca Mezzia, the Jewess; in truth, I had a little business with her, for I had twenty yards of black velvet to dispose of."

"And where did you get that twenty yards of black velvet, you naughty puss?" inquired de Bergerac.

"At one of my favourite shops," replied Madame Thibault; "however, I had it not long before I sold it—in less than a quarter of an hour, Rebecca bought it of me; and she got rid of it before I left her house. She bargained it away to a furnisher of funerals who lived a short distance in the country, one Monsieur Gripon: the old Jewess told me she was acquainted with a great many bad ones, but of all flints this Gripon was the worst. In short, she told me such things of him!"

"Ah, we all know enough of the wicked," said Mion de Boule; "so let us say our prayers, and go to sleep."

"Our host ought to have provided us with one more bed at least," remarked de Bergerac; "it will be impossible for us to lie here, four in a bed, unless, like silver table-spoons, we accommodate our figures one within the other."

"Then how are we to turn in the night?" asked Madame Thibault, laughing.

"Oh!" replied the lively de Bergerac, "when the majority feel desirous to turn round, I will give the word of command, 'to the right-about-face,' and we will all go together!"

"That horrible old Gripon, the undertaker, I thought he never would have taken his eyes off me," said Madame Thibault; "and what a dreadful pair of eyes they were—it makes me shudder now to think of them."

"For mercy's sake do not shudder now," exclaimed de Bergerac, "or we shall all four be out of bed on the cold brick floor."

"What is the breakfast hour in the 'Retreat?' said Mion de Boule; "no matter, we shall be up first, for our gentlemen have to sleep off a tolerable quantity of wine!"

At length the chatterers dropped off one by one to repose; and, as they had the good sense, in their emergency, to follow the advice and strategy of de Bergerac, and agreed

in accommodating themselves, they did not fall out.

The next morning when they received notice that the kiln—we beg pardon, 'the Retreat'—was in fit condition to receive them, the four accomplished fair ones repaired to the breakfast-table, and speedily caused disappearance to sundry pots of coffee, a colony of eggs, cold fowls, cutlets, pigeons, butter, bread, and fruit.

After a vast deal of agreeable conversation and flirtation, in which the old girls were not at all behind their more youthful companions, and which caused Monsieur Ferrand to make the inquiry, "What is youth?"

"The age of man till he is twenty, and of a woman until she is fifty," replied Cartouche, gallantly.

The hour approached that the carriage would arrive, to convey the ladies back to Paris. When it was drawn up at the door of *Le Pistolet*, Cartouche—who was all gaiety with the Champagne he had taken at breakfast, and

afterwards—would insist on escorting Madame Thibault au Dé through the subterraneous passage, round by the cellars, up stairs, and to the door of the hotel; where he was most gracefully handing her into the carriage, when suddenly turning, he beheld the hard visage of Gripon staring at him intensely, At the same moment, all four of the fair guests were showering their *adieux*—"*adieu*, Cartouche, *adieu cher* Cartouche."

The undertaker looked bewildered. Louis Dominique recognised his man in an instant, and having no other course to pursue, he bolted into *Le Pistolet*, rushed below, squeezed behind the wine casks, and was not at his ease until he was once more in the tile-kiln, the door of which he barricaded. His comrades were surprised at his altered manner.

Gripon threw a searching glance into the carriage. "Yes," it was the female that had brought the roll of black velvet into the dwelling of the Jewess, who he was well aware was

a receiver of stolen goods; and, "yes," it was the identical rascal that came to order the funeral for the fat landlady of the Horse and Dolphin; and, "yes," more important than all, this rascal was Cartouche, whose name had been advertised and proscribed in every possible direction; and, "yes," no one could have effected the robbing of the premises of Monsieur Gripon with such consummate skill and boldness, but this same Louis Dominique Crrtouche.

Gripon determined to have him in custody, and HE WAS A MAN OF HIS WORD! He entered the door of *Le Pistolet* and interrogated the landlord, who, as a matter of course, was all ignorance and innocence; he knew of no person residing at the time in his hotel; how was he to know anybody or everybody that called there for a glass of wine or cider?

Gripon was not to be easily satisfied, he swore that he saw a robber enter the house, and he would not quit it until he had searched the pre-

mises. The landlord inquired by what authority his house was to be molested?

"You have a villain harboured here, called Cartouche, and I will ferret him out; he has robbed me to more than the amount of three hundred and fifty louis d'ors."

It was in vain that the landlord of *Le Pistolet* protested, although, at the same moment, he changed colour; this did not escape the keen vision of Monsieur Gripon.

He went to the door, where seeing a peasant loitering about, he hired him to go on to the village in which he resided, and to carry a note, he wrote, to the *Juge de Paix*, to send a couple of officers *instanter*, while he remained on guard, so that no one could quit *Le Pistolet:* and these officers of justice were to be accompanied by his own workmen. Gripon seated himself moodily at the portal of the little inn, having, so far as he could make out, ascertained that there was no means of egress at the back; he had armed himself with a large clasp knife, which he carried

about with him. The landlord of *Le Pistolet* contrived to let his four lodgers in the kiln know what had taken place ; and they held a council of war. The landlord felt quite assured that no one could discover the secret communication from the cellar to the deserted tile-kilns, and if it did not prove a sanctuary in the present instance, it would not, on any future pressing occasion. Cartouche acknowledged the justice of this remark so far as their excellent landlord was himself concerned, but he begged, for the sake of the tenants of this sanctuary, that he might be furnished with a ladder that would reach the open summit of the kiln, and a good strong cart rope, by which he might let himself down the exterior, if circumstances should demand such a mode of retirement.

To this the landlord acceded, more out of deference to the wishes of so renowned an individual as Cartouche, than to any notion that the village officers of justice would penetrate his secret hold.

The money-loving Gripon now reflected that if he could by any possibility capture Cartouche, the reward for his apprehension would much exceed the sum of which he had been despoiled. He beheld with his own eyes the thief go into the house, and he was quite positive that he had not gone out again.

Some hours elapsed—Gripon was fidgetty and anxious: at length, the officers arrived, and after refreshing themselves to recover the fatigue of their walk, they commenced a search: but, as the landlord had surmised, it was fruitless, for the entrance had been too cunningly contrived; in fact, it was formed actually through a wine cask, placed upright in the cellar, in the bottom of which cask a tap had been inserted, from which the landlord, in the presence of Gripon and ne officers, drew a jug of wine. He did not however inform them that this miraculous hogshead, besides one top had two bottoms.

All their search was in vain; but Gripon was

not a man to be defeated; THE MAN OF HIS WORD had vowed that Cartouche should become his prisoner; so he left the officers and his own men in strict charge of the premises, and mounting his faded black horse, rode to Paris, where he went at once to Monsieur d'Argenson, and announced that he knew the place of concealment of the notorious Cartouche. A dozen archers of the guard were immediately ordered to the task of capturing the renowned brigand; and at the suggestion of Gripon, Madame Thibault au Dé was ferreted out, and arrested, and was forced to accompany the police agents to *Le Pistolet*.

They did not arrive until nearly dusk; and the landlord, who was on the look out, trembled as he distinctly saw Madame Thibault au Dé mounted on a mule, apparently a prisoner, for she was surrounded by the archers. He therefore went down, and gave instant notice for Cartouche and his comrades to prepare for the worst. A hint they were not long in taking, for they raised

their ladder, fastened their knotted rope, threw it outside, and as the cavalcade of archers approached from the east, they singly let themselves down the exterior of the tile kiln on the north, and crawling away on all fours until out of sight, walked all night, and got once more into their rendezvous in the metropolis.

"You would invite the ladies," said Cartouche; "I guessed how it would be."

Louis Dominique found that he must now retreat in earnest, so being in flourishing circumstances as far as pocket went, he made up his mind to a trip across the channel to England. He had no notion in paying a visit to the island, of doing it in a shabby way; he determined on adopting a *grand rôle*, and one that would give him magnificent opportunities.

At this period, John Law, the prince of financiers, tottered on his throne: and Cartouche wished to realise something more substantial than the Mississippi debentures.

The whole of these pecuniary gambling

affairs had led to the most shameless corruption in every branch of the executive in the government offices. Cartouche, therefore, had but little difficulty in obtaining (for money) the passport of a Hungarian Baron, on his way to England; this passport being signed by Monsieur Le Blance (the minister), it did not require to be *viséd.*

Behold then, Monseigneur the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble* (the new, and not inappropriate title of Louis Dominique) stepping on board the packet destined to carry over to England a distinguished visitor to the French ambassador in London, and this visitor was no less a person than the Marquis de Louvois!

The disguise as a Hungarian magnate of the period, with all the materials of which Cartouche easily furnished himself at Havre, was the most complete imaginable, the rest he left to his own ingenuity: he had picked up some German during the campaign; but he was per-

**Carouble* (argot) means "a false key."

fectly well aware that at the period few French persons understood the language: and he felt tolerably certain, that although the Elector of Hanover had ascended the throne of England, the German tongue was very little known. So he carefully broke up his own French into a northern *patois*.

The vessel sailed from Havre de Grace for Southampton; Cartouche reconnoitred his fellow-passengers: he recollected the elegant dissipated person of the Marquis de Louvois, although he was so wrapped up, that his delicate frame might sustain no injury during the voyage.

Cartouche got into conversation with an Englishman, a London stock-broker, by name Cyrus Jackson, who had been over to Paris during the Mississippi *furor*, and profited considerably thereby; Louis Dominique dexterously got him into conversation on the French finance, and Mr. Cyrus Jackson became thoroughly assured that the Hungarian Baron

knew a great deal more than he chose to communicate about foreign stock-jobbing.

An acquaintance thus formed was of great service to Cartouche when he took up his quarters in London.

The Marquis de Louvois could not remain below; that leveller of all distinctions or rank, the motion of a vessel at sea, compelled him to remain on deck, without being able to fix his eyes on anything. His footmen and pages were lying prostrate at the head of the vessel, undergoing agonising horrors, while a dozen of poor live turkies, with their legs tied, were rolling and twinkling their eyes in the most dejected manner, as the vessel pitched and rolled, and the sea broke over them saturating their feathers; they were bound for Southampton market, and were well washed before they arrived there. The Frenchwoman to whom they belonged, although she had crossed often before, was in a piteous condition, and must have been very partial to trade to undergo the death-like sensations of

sea-sickness, for the profits of the sale of twelve turkies, deducting her passage-money. The noble Marquis was seated on a chair placed for him on the deck, in the centre of the luggage, when a sudden lurch of the vessel sent the French peasant-poulteress off her pivot: the effects of which would certainly have covered the Marquis de Louvois, if Cartouche, with prompt politeness, had not interposed his cloak. Not Queen Elizabeth to Sir Walter Raleigh could have been more gracious than the delicate Marquis at this ready-witted act. He thanked his protector warmly, and begged to know to whom he was indebted?

Cartouche, bowing, said—"The Baron de Katzbac de Carouble has had the honour of doing this trifling service: it is not worthy of your lordship's acknowldgement."

"*Au contraire*," drawled out the Marquis, "you have done me an infinite service: *tout à fait impayable!* I should never have recovered

the shock ; in fact, I should have been utterly annihilated, overwhelmed, and positively rendered very uncomfortable, by that horrid person."

Thus was another good introduction formed, and considerably aided by the tact of Cartouche, who had become already aware of Mr. Cyrus Jackson's accomplishments in matters of scrip, and had taken a hint from him, while listening to his bad French ; for he ventured, in the hearing of the Marquis, to suggest a little financial operation to the extent of a million of francs. Now, the fact was that the Marquis de Louvois had been a serious loser *finally* by the schemes of John Law ; and, in the course of conversation, he had intimated as much to the Baron de Katzbac, which led to the feeler put forth by the latter.

By degrees, Cartouche contrived to insinuate himself so far into the good graces of the heedless Marquis, that he received an invitation to

journey with him from Southampton to London in the travelling carriage of Louvois.

Mr. Cyrus Jackson, who had his own reasons for his proceedings, rode post to the metropolis, and arrived at the same time, recommending the Marquis de Louvois, and the other illustrious foreigner, to a first-rate house of entertainment in Westminster.

Mr. Cyrus Jackson, who had carefully watched the whole progress of the Mississippi bubble, thought he could transplant a slip of it into his own native country. He was well aware that the nation was so intoxicated with the spirit of adventure, that the people would become a willing prey to the grossest delusion.

In a few days after the arrival of the Marquis and Cartouche in London, a post-chaise and four galloped through Cheapside. This carriage contained the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble, and Mr. Cyrus Jackson, and rattled up to the vicinity of the place where "merchants congregate." An eager crowd gradually

but rapidly filled up the street from side to side. As was his custom, the great Schultz, the continental banker (on whom the Marquis de Louvois had a letter of credit) was punctually on "Change," and being always on the *qui vive* for early intelligence, he had approached the vehicle (of which his friend, Mr. Grigsby, a stock-jobber, had given him intimation) just as the Baron and his friend alighted from it.

"Oh! Mr. Jackson, is it you?" exclaimed the banker.

"No other, I assure you; just from Paris, and—" here he whispered something which moved the financier considerably.

"It shall be done," said Schultz; "two millions of Columbo; good! The Marquis de Louvois is shrewd; but the information brought by your friend, the Baron, is, of course, of infinite value. Introduce me."

"Do you speak Magyar?" inquired Jackson.

"No!"

"It is the only language in which the Baron

converses, unless at court, his own parties, or when engaged in diplomatic conference. He is, *entre nous*, one of the most eccentric persons I ever met with."

"His name?"

"He belongs to the family of the Katzbacs," replied Jackson; "mind, I shall take a million myself. Let us see: five copper, eight lead, three silver, and two gold mines have been opened, and will realise—oh, it is a *Potosi*—an *El Dorado!*"

"You take yourself, of course?"

"An odd million of francs."

"And your friend?"

"The Baron speculates to the same extent exactly as the Marquis," replied Mr. Cyrus Jackson,

These were the preliminaries of one of the most extensive jobs of that day. "Columbo" rose 50 per cent in a week. People were literally mad in the pursuit of it; and the originators of the fraud contrived to sell out

while the *furor* lasted, and so realised enormous profits.

The letter of credit of the Marquis de Louvois on Schultz, and the known respectability of the latter, were grounds which assured the success of the scheme; nor did the former run any risk of disgrace, for he could always aver that his only crime had been "to believe in the word of a German Baron," and, he might have added, "to profit by it."

Master of so much wealth Cartouche now determined to surround his baronial dignity with the utmost *eclat*.

He knew that in England a foreigner was always a favourite. If titled—flattered, courted, fawned upon; if rich—ah! then adored! He could now combine all attributes.

The English nobility who led the fashion of the day, neglected their own artists, and poured their favour exclusively on foreigners. The Italian opera was the only theatre they patronised.

They even discarded the great Handel, (a Saxon) for the Italians, Bononcini and Ariosti.

The English ladies showed a decided preference for a foreigner. To be sure the Frenchmen and Italians may be masters of more small accomplishments than a Briton, and the foreigner is so very *au fait* in the sublime art of flattery.

He is a better dancer, he can outwit his more northern neighbour in cringing, is patient in his pliancy, to answer his own purpose, and *he does not get drunk*.

And yet while this petting of foreigners is going on, how seldom do the English know what the favoured persons have been in their own countries. Here was an instance—for Cartouche, a proscribed felon, because he happened to be born out of England, became the idol of the day. He certainly had an elegant mansion in some of the new buildings on the estate of the Marquis of Chandos, in the neigh-

bourhood of Cavendish Square; his carriage and four long-tailed greys, daily promenaded the Parks; the Hungarian Baron was ever an object of public curiosity—so rich, so liberal; his equipage, dress, and table, were the admiration of the fashionable world.

Some, who envied his good fortune, said that the Baron was a professor of chemistry, and that he had found out the grand secret, and was master of that invaluable transmuting stone, or powder, which could convert meaner metals into gold. At any rate, here he was, the brightest star in the hemisphere of fashion. The brilliant Marquis de Louvois was his frequent guest.

The Baron de Katzbac was introduced by Mr. Cyrus Jackson to Sir John Blunt, who, taking a hint from the Mississippi scheme formed by John Law, projected a similar bubble for the entertainment of his own countrymen, but even with a smaller prospect of success, for the South Sea scheme promised no

commercial advantage of any consequence. It was buoyed up by nothing but the folly and rapaciousness of individuals, which became so blind and extravagant, that the whole nation was imposed on, and infected with the spirit of stock-jobbing to an astonishing degree. Tobias Smollet has recorded that all distinction of party, religion, sex, character, and circumstances, were swallowed up in this universal concern, or in some such pecuniary project. Exchange Alley was filled with a strange concourse of statesmen and clergymen, churchmen and dissenters, Whigs and Tories, physicians, lawyers, tradesmen, and even multitudes of women.

In what a different position had fate placed Cartouche in the two bubbles, French and English: in his own country, he picked pockets during the Mississippi run; while in the midst of the South Sea rage, he was a leading man at the helm, although still picking pockets. He was named as director of one of the Welsh Copper Companies, the York Buildings Company, and

about a hundred other such schemes. The sums proposed to be raised by these expedients amounted to three hundred millions sterling, which exeeded in value all the lands in England.

The South Sea scheme raised such a flood of eager avidity and extravagant hope, that the majority of the directors were swept along with it, even contrary to their own sense and inclination. The cunning, the knavish Baron de Katzbac, and the elegant, dissolute Marquis de Louvois, were amongst the number.

Better names than either of theirs were involved in the delusion that the stock would become more valuable, and fetch a higher price. The celebrated Gay, the poet, had just published his works by subscription, and with great success, but this was almost instantly damped by his being involved in the ruinous failure of the South Sea scheme. The younger Craggs (then in government employ) presented him with South Sea Stock, which, by its rapid rise in value, placed independence within his grasp,

and made him master of twenty thousand pounds. Dean Swift importuned him, while he had money, to purchase an annuity, lest old age should overtake him unprepared: but Gay, who seemed almost entranced with the illusory dream of dignity and splendour, could not think of diminishing, even in the smallest degree, his present means of greatness; the vision, however, only gleamed—the principal and profit were almost as instantaneously lost. On the 29th of September, 1720, the stock, which had been up to three hundred and forty pounds, sunk to one hundred and fifty: and several eminent goldsmiths and bankers, who had lent great sums upon it, were obliged to stop payment, and abscond. The ebb of this portentous tide was so violent, that it bore down everything in its way, and an infinite number of families were overwhelmed with ruin. The whole of the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble's immense fortune vanished in a twinkling.

Acting *en Grand Seigneur*, Cartouche, as a

mask, still kept up his assemblies at his own residence, and he had always been very particular in his attentions to the wealthy Lady * * * * * * * *. Her beauty and her wit, might go for something in this preference of the illustrious Hungarian Baron—her costly jewels, for much more. She commonly wore a ring of immense value, the diamond in which had been brought by her first husband from the Carnatic. To possess this gem became a kind of passion with Cartouche, but he had not an accomplice to whom he could entrust his secret, and vast dexterity was requisite. He had just received a very polite note, intimating that his bankers account was overdrawn. He had a splendid party as usual, at which Lady * * * * * * * * was present. The assembly was unusually superb, as being the last the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble gave for the season.

Though a woman of strong intellect and much decision of character, Lady * * * * * * * * was pitiably nervous; she had a singular

aversion to pungent odours of any kind; and her mansion in the country having been twice burned down while she resided there, the very word "fire" caused her to tremble. As she had related this repeatedly, the wily Cartouche was not an unobservant listener; he had also been so close an admirer of the lady's ring, that he had been enabled to get one made (with a false stone) so as exactly to resemble it.

On the evening to which we refer, a concert was given in the Italian drawing-room in the mansion of the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble; and while Senesino was trilling one of his most delicious arias, the room became partially filled with smoke.

Some alarm was manifested, and at length a cry of fire was raised. Lady * * * * * * * * was an object of general attention; and the assiduity of the Baron de Katzbac was remarkable. Unfortunately, while attempting to quiet her apprehensions, he let fall at her feet a small *flaçon* of powerful aromatic vinegar (so potent,

indeed, that it might once have been a portion of the celebrated "Three Thieves' Vinegar"). This caused her ladyship to faint outright.

To remove the rings from her fingers was a necessary precaution, as anything which impeded *circulation* would be decidedly injurious to the Baron. Of these, the friendly de Katzbac took charge, in the face of the assembled guests, and placed them in one of his waistcoat pockets.

The cause of the alarm being removed, and restoratives having been employed, Lady * * * * * * * * recovered; and then it was that the gallant Baron de Katzbac de Carouble returned the rings, placing them on her fingers with much tender delicacy, the *false* one amongst the rest—the real diamond remained in his own keeping.

Then Senesino warbled again, and as he soared enchantingly up into his high notes, Cartouche thought of his *falsetto!* The mansion was still odorous of smoke, and Lady * * * * * * * * sought a pretext for retiring

early; and, a very short time after the party broke up, the Baron de Katzbac de Carouble departed himself, leaving behind his elegant (hired) mansion, his superb (hired) equipages, his retinue of domestics, with their wages unpaid, a host of tradesmen's bills, and a call upon him from the city on the following morning on a stock-jobbing transaction of upwards of ten thousand pounds!

CHAPTER XXIII.

CARTOUCHE CROSSES FROM ENGLAND TO OSTEND—A FEMALE SAINT ENDEAVOURS TO CONVERT HIM, FOR WHICH HE PROVES HIS GRATITUDE—HE RETURNS TO PARIS—AND IS ABOUT TO ENTER ON A MATRIMONIAL SPECULATION—MEETS WITH HIS MATCH.

CARTOUCHE, knowing he should receive no mercy in London, took his remaining portable valuables, and Lady * * * * * * * * 's diamond ring, and rode post to Dover; where he, most fortunately, found a Dutch fishing boat in the harbour, the master of which, having disposed of his turbot, was willing, for a liberal consideration, to carry Cartouche across to Ostend. He was just in time, for the whole bubble was blown; and Knight, the treasurer of the South Sea Company, who had been entrusted

with the secrets of the entire affair, thought proper to withdraw himself from the kingdom. The directors and principal officers of the company, were ordered into custody. So Cartouche thought himself fortunate in being domiciled in the house of a widow at Ostend, who received him as a lodger; and he intended to stay there until he could contrive to negotiate the sale of the diamond.

The widow, whose name was Vigneul, was very pious, very talkative, very litigious, and very inquisitive.

She would make her lodger wait daily for his breakfast while she was at early chapel; she would then take another hour to talk over all her neighbours who were, or were not, at the service; and then she would look much more closely into the affairs of Monsieur Cartouche than was at all either convenient or agreeable to him. She saw the newspapers, and she had access to an English journal which was sent over to an old Jacobite Catholic priest, who had taken

up his residence at Ostend. There was the full, true, and particular account of the hourly discoveries of the frauds of the stock-jobbers, great and small; the sudden disappearance of the fashionable Hungarian Baron de Katzbac de Carouble; the extraordinary robbery from the person of the lovely Lady * * * * * * * * of her diamond ring, which, for brilliancy, weight, and value, was only to be surpassed by the Pitt diamond, and those which belonged to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Great Mogul. As a matter of course, as these accounts were taken from a newspaper, it was not the writer's fault, if they were a little exaggerated.

Madame Vigneul puzzled her wits to ascertain who or what Cartouche could be. He did not appear to follow any trade or profession, never received any letters, and, moreover, never went to church.

Madame Vigneul was one of those persons, who, having passed the early part of her life in

gay and thoughtless society, and having talked two husbands out of the world, found her time to hang heavy on her hands; therefore, like a vast number of other miserable sinners, she took to constant church-going, as a resource against *ennui.*

Not contented with keeping her own soul in good and substantial repair, she was afflicted with such a zeal to cause all her friends to walk in the same path, that she became a positive nuisance at nine out of the ten houses at which she called. If the younger and light-hearted branches of the families were in the enjoyment of the natural buoyancy and exuberance of spirit given to them by an all-wise Creator—Madame Vigneul, who was better informed, would check the hilarity, and impress on her youthful friends the necessity of sanctity, and a recollection that death must one day approach them!

She was a real specimen of the kill-joy genus. Madame Vigneul, in her proper feeling, observ-

ing that her lodger did not go to chapel, undertook with great earnestness to convert him! Alack! to make him a model, little did she know what a hard lump of clay she had chosen.

Now, Cartouche had patience when it answered his purpose, but the eternal fire that Madame Vigneul kept up at him was unendurable; it was as disagreeable as her insatiable curiosity. Driven out of the house one day by the production of a homily, which the good lady announced that she was about to read aloud to him, Cartouche took a turn on the ramparts, when he recollected that he had most incautiously left the key in the lock of his valise, and in which was deposited, among some other valuables, the diamond ring. He hastened back, and finding the street door open, he silently ascended the stairs, but was greatly astonished and disconcerted at observing Madame Vigneul turning his effects over and over.

He in an instant made up his mind how to

act, and descended again without disturbing his landlady in her agreeable occupation. But he took care at night, prior to going to bed, to ascertain that his effects were all safe. They were there, but everything, diamond ring included, had been turned over, and replaced.

On the table in his room laid the homily!

When Madame Vigneul went to chapel in the morning, Cartouche set to work to pack up, and retire: he not only very neatly put up all his own articles, but breaking open a closet of the old lady's during her absence, he took therefrom a silver coffee-pot, an antique chased goblet, a dozen silver spoons, and about thirty louis d'ors in money, with which he quietly decamped; and in lieu of the valuables of Madame Vigneul, he left her the homily, and the following sentences, extracted from that excellent discourse, in his own hand-writing—*videlicet*.

"Madame Vigneul,

"'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.'

"'Whatsoever thou findest in thy hand to do, saith the wise man, do it with all thy might.'

"'Therefore take time, whilst time doth stay.'

"'For time in time will pass away.'

"'Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.'

"Thine

"SILVER PLATO."

And away went from Ostend this quintessence of rascality.

As he had not been heard of, or seen in Paris, for a considerable period, he hankered to rejoin his old associates, on the principle that rooks prefer being in flocks: as a proof, you never see a rook flying singly that it does not utter a sort of bemoaning caw, much more hoarse and melancholy, and very different in style and execution, than when a large flight are in company. A solitary crow always appears to flap his wings more heavily than when

fifty or a hundred together whirl about with positive aerial music in their notes. Who has not watched them careering around a lofty old tower, or spreading their inky wings over the tall and aged trees on which their wig-wams, or twig dwellings, have been built for centuries?

Cartouche recommenced business in his beloved native place, but his first proceedings were very quiet, and positively of a domestic nature: and he also assumed a new mode of attack. He, of course, had been heartily welcomed back by his comrades, both male and female. He might still have drawn in his horns, and have retired on a large sum of money; repented—but his time was not yet come; and, somehow or other, he always kept putting off the evil day when he intended to try and become honest. During his employ in the army, his talent for appropriation of the property of other people had been, in a measure, legalised. In the society of the officers his manners had much improved. There was an equal amend-

ment of his personal appearance. His crying and awful fault was his fondness of gambling, at which he was almost always a loser. This vice utterly prevented him from ever attempting a reform, or even indulging a hope to resume a position in the world, unaccompanied by fraud or violence.

In the adventure we are now about to relate, Cartouche met with his match. His spies had brought him intelligence that a rich retired merchant, Monsieur Beaubasson, who lived outside the gate of St. Denis, in a handsome house, was in expectation of a young gentleman from Rouen, who had been contracted to marry his daughter, Mademoiselle Estelle Beaubasson; the informant further stated that Beaubasson had never yet seen his intended son-in-law. The old gentleman was in the habit of taking a little walk down the road every evening.

Cartouche sent three of his partisans to waylay and affect to rob Monsieur Beaubasson. His orders were obeyed, when in rushed Car-

touche in a travelling dress, sword in hand, and rescued the old gentleman, beating off his own comrades; this had of course been preconcerted. Beaubasson was very grateful to his preserver, who offered him his arm to lead him in safety to his own house: and, in his garrulity, he informed Cartouche that he had walked out in the hope of meeting Monsieur Melastéque, who was about to marry into his family: but had it not been for the gallantry and courage of the gentleman who rescued him, the wedding might have been delayed by his own funeral. Cartouche, who was an excellent actor, on hearing this, stepped back a pace, and exclaimed, "Oh happiness! oh, most fortunate occurrence!"

"What is it?" said Beaubasson.

"What!" replied Cartouche, throwing his arms round the old gentleman, and pretending in his emotion to shed tears of joy, "I have had the good luck to save the life of my father-in-law."

"Heaven's will be done," fervently cried

Monsieur Beaubasson. Cartouche saw the old gentleman to his door, and promising to call on the following morning, declined entering and being introduced to Mademoiselle Beaubasson, on account of his travelling dress, which was dusty and in disorder.

Both the parents, Malastéque the elder, as well as Beaubasson, had talked too much abroad about the large portion they were each to give to the young couple on their nuptials.

Cartouche, in his most attractive costume, called at the house of Monsieur Beaubasson, on the following morning.

He was shown into a room which led to the garden, where, after waiting a little time, a young country fellow approached him. After staring at each other for some time (for Cartouche began to wonder whether or not this person might be Monsieur the bridegroom), he put a question or two to the countryman, and discovered, that he had only just arrived, and that he had a recommendation from Lisette,

the waiting-maid of Mademoiselle Beaubasson, to be hired there as servant. Cartouche told him to come nearer to him, and announced that he had arrived from Rouen to claim the hand of Mademoiselle Beaubasson. "Don't be abashed, young man, I want to ask you a question or two: come closer: be frank with me, and depend upon it, I will reward you liberally." The fresh-coloured countryman approached Cartouche sufficiently close that they might whisper to each other. During which, the propensity of Cartouche was so strong upon him, that he could not resist whipping a small bag of money out of the peasant's pocket.

The bashful countryman said, "Sweet sir: I am at your service;" but at the same moment he dexteriously drew Cartouche's watch from his fob.

"So it seems," replied Cartouche; "but, my friend, did I not observe you to insinuate your hand into my pocket, and take from me my watch?"

"Most excellent sir," said the timid peasant, "by my honour and reputation you must have been mistaken; I could not dare to take such a liberty."

"But you have taken my watch, nevertheless," exclaimed Cartouche; "give it me back, and I will reward you," and here he exhibited the little bag of money he had filched.

The countryman was abashed, and said, "La, dear me! I fear there is some mistake here," and accordingly produced the watch.

Cartouche looked his new friend steadfastly in the face, and said, "I do not intend to pay you any flattering compliment, but you picked my pocket in a superb and first-rate style; you are not a Parisian operator, but you understand how to do your business neatly: provincial, I perceive. I think I stand in the presence of Monsieur Mandrin?"

The countryman, bowing, replied in the affirmative.

"Then," said Louis Dominique, "we are

worthy to be introduced to each other: I AM CARTOUCHE!"

Mandrin appeared somewhat over-awed by the condescension of the great artist before him.

"What brings you to Paris?" inquired Cartouche.

"I have only brought in a few contraband goods," replied Mandrin, respectfully, "just to amuse myself. I know, my dear friend, that you are by right in sole possession of the capital, and I shall beg to retire from the scene of your exploits."

"By no means, my good fellow," said Cartouche; "permit me to request your co-operation in the little adventure I have just now on foot. Let it be known to posterity that Cartouche and Mandrin had no petty jealousies. We are contemporaries—*I* town, *you* country; let us be friends!"

"Agreed, agreed," replied Mandrin; "I ask but to share the glory of your little scheme; I relinquish every idea of the profits."

"This is, *par Dieu,* the very disinterestedness of honour!" exclaimed Cartouche.

Cartouche told Mandrin of his adventure the preceding evening, and that he had persuaded Monsieur Beaubasson that he was his son-in-law. With equal candour, Mandrin acquainted Cartouche, that gaining information at Rouen that Monsieur Malastéque, junior, was coming to Paris to receive this marriage portion, he had obtained a recommendation; and disguising himself as a simple peasant, he had hoped to have got the situation of footman in Beaubasson's family, that he might the more readily try for a haul at the money. But, however, as affairs had taken this sudden turn, and he found the great general, Cartouche, in the field, it was agreed between them that Mandrin should pass as the servant of the false Malastéque, junior.

This extraordinary introduction of the two celebrated robbers had thus no sooner taken place, than Monsieur Beaubasson made his ap-

pearance, not quite recovered from the apprehension into which he had been thrown by the attack on his person the night previous.

It should be announced (in case the reader should not discover it) that Monsieur Beaubasson had never been possessed of a very brilliant genius; in fact, he was one of those white-peruked, round, strawberry-faced, old twaddles, who twirl their thumbs, and are always wishing for meal-times. Very good-natured, garrulous, fond of a pet-dog, *bons-bons*, and his daughter Estelle, and who passed his days in hesitating about what he *should* do, and repenting of what he *had* done.

Cartouche touched on the topics he thought would be most interesting to Monsieur Beaubasson; inquired when he should have the opportunity to be delighted with the introduction to Mademoiselle; stated that the country lad (pointing to Mandrin) had once been his servant, and that if Monsieur Beaubasson did not hire him, that he should take him again into his own

employ, for he was fully assured that he was a pattern of honesty, and had the very best of characters.

"Why," replied the old gentleman, "should he become my servant, he will be yours, my son. Bless my soul, how very like your father you are; quite the image; and I remember my old friend Melastéque, aye, when he was under your age; we used to be sad waggish boys together; we were so much in each other's constant society, that people nick-named us Pyramus and Thisbe—no, no, Damon and Pythias, I mean, ha! ha! ha!"

Mandrin, who instantly saw the character he had to deal with, began, in a *patois*, to tell a long rigmarole of a story, of how they had been robbed on the road; interrupted by Cartouche, who rebuked him for troubling his father-in-law with a thing of so little consequence. "Little consequence, indeed," said Mandrin, "why how are you to manage, Sir, without money, until you can hear from Rouen?"

Cartouche ordered him to be silent, as Mademoiselle Beaubasson entered the room, blushing. Cartouche addressed her with a very good grace, and the young lady thanked him with great sincerity for the important service he had rendered to her dear father the evening before. Cartouche, after hazarding a few gay common-place phrases, offered his arm to Estelle, and they entered the garden together: where we will for the present leave them, perambulating the avenues in serious discourse. After they had gone out, good, kind old Monsieur Beaubasson fumbled about for his keys, and unlocking a bureau, and taking out a bag, which he handed to Mandrin, said, "Your master has been robbed, which will probably put him to temporary inconvenience: here are two hundred pistoles, which I place in your honest charge to pay his present expences until he hears from home. But, mind, you need not say one word to him about it."

"No, Monsieur," replied Mandrin, as he

put the bag into his pocket, "I will not mention it to him, you may depend on it."

Thus far was the farce carried on, and the two thieves established in the house during the day, and at night it was supposed that Cartouche (otherwise Malastéque, junior) went to his hotel to sleep. Old Beaubasson busied himself with the contracts and law papers, which had previously been prepared for the signatures of the parties concerned; and Cartouche made his way into the good graces of Mademoiselle, who, it must be confessed, found her affianced much more agreeable and *debonnaire* than she expected, from the description she had received from Rouen of the person and manners of Monsieur Malastéque, junior.

Cartouche began to wonder whether he should succeed in his plan before the arrival of Monsieur Malastéque. He had already deprived him of one wife (and, be it remembered, his own poor sister of a husband); but he was remorseless, and he was perfectly aware that he

had to deal with a lump of imbecility, unless Malastéque should have acquired a vast deal more knowledge of the world. But Malastéque was a timber merchant, and had thriven on wood, which commodity was always uppermost in his head. Mandrin had marked him out as his prey at Rouen, and it was a voracious young pike opposed to a fat chub.

While Cartouche was playfully conversing with Mademoiselle in the garden, and her father was taking his afternoon's nap, of which he made himself an allowance of forty winks, a knock was heard at the door; Mandrin went to open it, and beheld Monsieur Malastéque and his servant, with his trunk on his shoulder.

Monsieur Malastéque inquired if this was the dwelling of Monsieur Beaubasson? Mandrin, without changing a muscle of his face, replied in the negative, and pointed off to a distance. Malastéque appeared to be disappointed, and referred to a letter he took from

his pocket. He then asked Mandrin if he knew where Monsieur Beaubasson lived? Mandrin said that he had heard of such a name, somewhere in the neighbourhood, but that he was a stranger; and if inquiry was made on the other side of the gate of St. Denys, beyond the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth house, probably the gentleman might find Monsieur de Beaubasson. With this unsatisfactory information Malastéque was obliged to content himself, as Mandrin shut the door in his face; and while the timber-merchant bridegroom, and his man, with a heavy box on his back, proceeded on their fruitless errand, Mandrin, calling Cartouche aside, apprised him that the *fiancé* had arrived; but, that they still had some little time to spare, before Malastéque would return from his wild-goose chase.

Cartouche had now made a decided impression on Estelle, and became extremely anxious that the marriage contract should be signed. They went to supper, and Cartouche charmed

Monsieur Beaubasson with his gaiety. The old gentleman vowed (after a few glasses of wine) that he was forcibly reminded of his early friend, Malastéque *Père* ; that there was the same roguish twinkle of the eye, and the tone of the voice was exact. The old gentleman then, in the gaiety of his heart, sung part of an old *chanson à boire*, which he affirmed to have been a great favourite with Malastéque and himself in the heyday of their boyhood. Cartouche instantly chaunted the verse, to the great delight of Beaubasson, who exclaimed, with tears in his eyes, "Your father's voice, to half a demi-semiquaver."

Cartouche, in an exchange of glances with Mandrin, congratulated himself on complete success, when a loud knocking was heard; Mandrin again went to the door, and was endeavouring to play the same trick, when he saw it was Monsieur Malastéque, of sending him away, but Malastéque had employed a *laquais de place*, who conducted him to the house, and

assured him it was the residence of Beaubasson. Indeed, Malastéque was now so vociferous, that the old gentleman arose from table to inquire what was the matter, when he found Mandrin trying with all his might to eject the timber-merchant from the door.

Monsieur Beaubasson then desired that the intruder might be shown into another room, that he might hear what he had to say, and why he came at that unseasonable hour?

"I must and will speak to Monsieur Beaubasson," said Malastéque, in a rage at the conduct of Mandrin.

"I am Monsieur Beaubasson."

"Then permit me to embrace you, my dear sir"—and Malastéque endeavoured to clasp the old gentleman in his arms, which affectionate attempt was rendered unavailable by Beaubasson slipping into a corner, and exclaiming—

"Have the goodness to let me alone."

"Then you do not recognise me?" said Malastéque.

"I never saw you before in all my life," replied the old gentleman.

"That is no reason why you should not recognise me," continued Malastéque. "I have just arrived from Rouen; my name is Malastéque, I am the son of your old friend, and correspondent, the timber-merchant, with whom I am in partnership."

"Perfectly impossible," remarked Beaubasson.

"It is not only possible, but true; I am come hither, as you well know, to be united to your daughter, Estelle. Well, I never met a more incredulous person in my life; look here—behold your own letter to me, fixing the day of my arrival."

And here, while Malastéque was nervously searching for the letter, Mandrin got close to Beaubasson, and said, in an under tone, "Be on your guard, Sir; that is one of the fellows that robbed us on the road; and he took away my master's letters, besides his money. It is the

most audacious attempt at imposition I ever remember to have witnessed."

Beaubasson looked rather alarmed, and leant on the arm of Mandrin; he then elevated his double chin, and assuming an air of determination, said, "This is, doubtless, a clever plan of yours, but you have arrived too late; the true Monsieur Malastéque has fortunately got here before you."

"I tell you that I am the true Malastéque. —Malastéque, timber-merchant, *Quai de Bois de Charpente, Rouen.*"

"What effrontery," exclaimed Beaubasson; "I will at once confound you," and he pointed to Mandrin, "look at that young fellow."

"Very well, what of him?" said Malastéque.

"I suppose you will swear, next, that he is your servant."

"Indeed he is not," indignantly replied the timber-dealer.

"Oh! you own that, do you," continued

Beaubasson ; " well, then, does it not make you blush, when you think of the atrocity you committed on his worthy master and himself—you and your gang—robbing them publicly on the highway ?"

Malastéque now reddened with rage, and roared out, " I—I—rob on the highway ?"

Mandrin whispered to Beaubasson, " You have touched him to the quick, now, Sir ;" and then, turning to Malastéque, said, " Yes, you stopped my master and me on the road from Rouen—you and the horrid set you were with—and you threatened to blow our brains into each others heads, unless we gave up our property. I will go to the nearest magistrate, and swear to it."

Malastéque stared wildly, and muttered, " Taken for a thief."

" You will be presently," said Beaubasson.

" Hear me," exclaimed Malastéque ; " look at this," and he produced a miniature from his pocket; " here is the picture, the portrait of your daughter!"

"Which I saw you pull out of my master's pocket," bawled the incorrigible Mandrin.

Cartouche now hearing high words, thought that the promptitude of his presence might be necessary, so he arose from the table, and went into the next room. But who can picture the expression of Malastéque's face, when he beheld Louis Dominique Cartouche, who once was to have been his brother-in-law, and whose crimes had broken off his first marriage, and seemed now very probable to break off his second attempt. Fear, horror, disgust, all were concentrated in the countenance of the much-injured little timber-merchant.

Mandrin opened the street-door, having laid hold of a broom that stood in the entry; Beaubasson drew his sword, which had not seen the light for many years, and was therefore rather tight in the scabbard; and Malastéque made good his retreat from the house, almost doubting the evidence of his senses.

"What could he, what should he do, at that

time of night, where could he find anybody to identify him?" He wandered up and down, wringing his hands, and slapping his forehead.

When Beaubasson returned to the supper-table, he determined that after so barefaced an attempt to impose upon him, no further delay should take place in affixing the signatures to the contract, and he poured out bumpers in the hope of recovering his own courage, and proposed health and happiness to the bride and bridegroom. In the fullness of his joy he kissed Estelle, and ordered Mandrin to go down the street to a certain house, which he minutely described, wherein resided his notary, and to request him to come directly. Mandrin did not lose a moment, but started off.

In the meantime, Cartouche plied Beaubasson with wine, and his daughter with flattery, to beguile the time until Monsieur Le Notaire should arrive.

When Mandrin got half-way down the street, he beheld a sight that took away his self-pos

session. He saw Monsieur Malastéque leading a number of the archers of the guard; he had not the slightest doubt but that they were on the road to arrest Cartouche, so he quickly turned back to give his confederate timely notice, that he might make his escape.

But Monsieur Malastéque perceiving Mandrin, started into a run, with the archers at his heels, well armed.

Mandrin got in, beckoned Cartouche out of the room, and in hurried accents, said, "We have lost the game: the archers of the guard surround the door!"

"Never mind," said Cartouche, "we will face them boldly!"

"You are a devil incarnate," remarked Mandrin."

Malastéque made his way in, followed by the archers; they entered the room, to the great annoyance and terror of Estelle and Monsieur Beaubasson,

Malastéque said, "Here I am again, I have

been accused as a robber: I have now brought these gentlemen, who I most fortunately met in the street: and I charge them to arrest Louis Dominique Cartouche, a known and terrible thief, who has prevented my being married once, and was on the point of accomplishing the same object a second time: and I accuse this other rascal of aiding and abetting him. Monsieur le Prêvot of the archers of the guard; seize the villains!"

Le Prêvot approached Cartouche, and gravely said, "Come along my fine fellows; resistance is useless: we have long wanted you." He took Cartouche by the collar, and quitted the house. Beaubasson, Estelle, and Malastéque were entering into explanations, when they were interrupted by the loud laughing from the archers of the guard, outside the door, and for which they could not by any means account.

But when Cartouche was out of hearing, he said to the archers, "Thank you, my lads, you were just in time."

The comrades of Louis Dominique were waiting in the street, disguised as the archers of the guard, and Ferrand personated Monsieur le Prêvot!

All these incidents had occurred so rapidly, that poor old Beaûbasson was nearly driven out of his senses. Estelle was in amazement. And Malastéque did nothing but wonder at the extraordinary events which had thrown him in juxta-position with Cartouche. He was just beginning to make affairs perceptible to Monsieur Beaubasson: and was heartily congratulating himself on having at last placed so great a criminal in the hands of justice, when a letter was left at the door addressed to Monsieur Beaubasson. The old gentleman had lost his gold spectacles, so he begged of Malestéque to read the letter: and clearing his voice, he delivered himself aloud, as follows:—

"Monsieur Beaubasson,

"You may congratulate yourself, that you

are still in possession of your daughter's doury; the two persons who were arrested in your house, were no less celebrated persons than Cartouche and Mandrin."

"There, there," exclaimed Malastéque, "what do you think of that? see what you owe to my penetration."

He read on;

"Happily you were saved in time, by your fool of a son-in-law."

"There's impudence, for you!"

"But, be good enough to announce to Monsieur Malastéque that the archers of the guard he accosted, were only the comrades of Cartouche in disguise.

"Consider yourself well off this time.

"Embrace the lady, and beg her pardon for me.

"Your humble servant,

"CARTOUCHE."

Malastéque again deplored his fate; but they

were all somewhat comforted that the portion had not fallen into the hands of this brigand-swindler. Though, before he retired to rest, Monsieur Beaubasson discovered that besides the two hundred pistoles he had advanced to Mandrin, the vagabonds had walked off with a valuable snuff box, his diamond buckles, and all the *bijoutérie* about the room.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FATE OF CONCONNAS AND THIBAULT AU DÉ—A FOREST ADVENTURE — THE BRIGANDS SUSTAIN A DEFEAT — AND MONSIEUR DE HAUTEFORT IS CURED OF HIS JEALOUSY.

When a Frenchman is expatriated—particularly a Parisian—he is a very unhappy personage, notwithstanding his natural facility of appearing to accomodate himself to the habits of other countries in which he may happen to be thrown. Cartouche braved all perils of recognition, and returned to the metropolis. He had lost his friend Count Conconnas, who, for a warrior, died a lamentably ignoble death, for after the peace had been signed, he was accidentally shot through the head by a raw recruit at Fort

Knocque, who was sporting for sparrows perched on the battlements, and had forgot that he had left a bullet in the barrel of his musket, when he loaded it for his game; poor Conconnas, parading the ramparts, fell a victim. Better hearted persons have had a worse fate.

After a week or so Cartouche was listless for want of the active employment of his abilities; he longed for his old dangerous enterprises, and he sought the haunts of his former associates. But, alas! there were sad defalcations—Thibault au Dé had been forwarded to the galleys for a term of ten years. The crisp curly head of hair which used to be toyed with by the fair fingers of his wife had been ruthlessly disfigured, shaven, and shorn by the gaol authorities; his excellently formed leg was graced with a chain of thirty pounds weight; and he, under compulsion, had to wheel a heavy barrow of rubbish or stones from sunrise to sunset, when on land; but, when the galleys were ordered into service, there was the elegant Thibault au

Dé chained to a huge oar, exposed to the cold spray, the shot, large and small, of the enemy, and the ferocious tyranny of the unrelenting lashes of the overseers of the galley-slaves. To these miseries must be added the want of clothing and the paucity of food. No criminals ever suffered more than the galley convicts during the period of the wars of Louis the Fourteenth; and Monsieur Thibault au Dé used to turn over in his mind what a sin and shame it was that he had only stolen a roll of crimson velvet and two dozen pairs of shoes for Madame, and that for such a paltry theft he was suffering these torments. It was positively preposterous! To be sure, Thibault au Dé quite forgot all his other irregularities.

Inigo was still in the land of the living, but to remain so was reduced to every variety of cunning shift; Bras d'Acier continued chief of the gang, which had, nevertheless, lost many gallant fellows by the increased vigilance of the police. Cartouche was well received by the

brigands, and unanimously appointed to command one of the organised divisions of the Parisian thieves. This task he undertook with an alacrity worthy of a better cause, and he became the life and soul of every infernal enterprise, flying from post to post with marvellous rapidity—a *hic et ubique* ruffian. He directed all affairs of importance, and especially those in which it was necessary to overcome *La Pousse*.* Cartouche augmented the number of his brigades. The Ile de St. Louis, the city, the Quartier de Louvre, the Fauxbourgs St. Germain, St. Martin, St. Denys, and the Marais, were duly invested; the gang were employed at all hours and on all occasions. In the churches, they stole from the person with their *own* hands, while with hands of wax, duly gloved, they appeared to be engaged on their knees in prayer; this ingenious performance was invented by Inigo, who gained great credit by it. There was not a lock in Paris safe, and the

* In *Argot*, *La Pousse* means "a body of gendarmes."

confederated villains professed to enter any apartment of a house (*glisser*) unseen.

Louis Dominique was in such repute at this period that he had four mistresses; viz., Geraldine la Valonne, a courtesan with great pretensions to beauty: Cunegonde, a German; La Sœur Grise, a demure little devil of a false nun; and Antoinette, *alias* Fourgasse,† one of the *fameuses Poissonnieres de la Halle.* These ladies, who shared his caresses as well as his liberality, were made useful as receivers of booty. La Sœur Grise was the cleverest of the four, for her modest mien, and apparently artless manner, gave her access to a numerous and respectable acquaintance.

She had particularly ingratiated herself into the confidence of Madame de Hautefort's *demoiselle de toilette,* who supplied her with information respecting the caskets and inlaid cabinets of her mistress's friends: and thus gave the opportunity of many robberies of jewels,

† In *Argot, Fourga* means a receiver of stolen goods.

and articles of *vertu*, being committed. Monsieur and Madame de Hautefort, accompanied by Mademoiselle Rochambeau, purposed proceeding to Rheims, to be present at the marriage of one of her sisters, who had been affianced to a young nobleman of ancient family and large fortune. And to confer a proper *solemnity* on the alliance, it had been arranged by the bride's family that the *trousseau* should be ordered from one of the first *artistes* in Paris, and should journey to Rheims under the protection of M. de Hautefort's *cortège*. The preparations being complete, the jealous minister of finance appointed the day on which they were to set out; having delayed his departure till the last minute, in consequence of an unexpected cabinet investigation of the finances, at which, of course, he was required to be present. The anxiety and irritation, however, which this proceeding caused him, brought on so severe an attack of the gout, to which he was extremely liable, that it soon became evident that instead

of being in a fit condition to travel, Monsieur de Hautefort could do nothing but lay upon his bed and groan, and curse his unlucky fate unceasingly. What was to be done? How could the nuptials take place in the absence of the aunt (Madame de Hautefort), whose wealth and position added new lustre to the family; the beautiful Louise, whose charms would be the envy of all the ladies of Rheims; and the magnificent *trousseau!* that last point could *not* be overcome. The two ladies, therefore, united their trembling voices, and ventured to hope that M. de Hautefort would allow himself to be left behind. The burst of passion which followed this petition had well nigh banished the gout; the jealous *financier* sprung off the heap of pillows, and in a tone of agony, exclaimed, "Do you imagine, torment of my loving soul that I can for one moment trust you out of my sight?—*Could* you leave me behind you?" he continued, dropping his voice to a tone of unutterable tenderness.

"I might be able, dear."

"Then go," said Monsieur de Hautefort, in a tone and manner only to be assumed by a martyr of the gout. "Go!" he repeated; and without further parley Madame took him at his word, ordered the travelling carriage, and set out for Rheims with her neice, the *trousseau*, and her diamonds, which were exceedingly beautiful, and of great value.

Whenever there was anything that related to diamonds, the mouth of Cartouche watered, and he pricked up his ears on the alert. He rewarded La Sœur Grise with five louis d'ors and a chaste embrace; and took the road speedily, with Bras D'Acier and two other equally respectable thieves, towards Verte Feuille. The party then posted themselves in ambush in the forest of Villers Cotterets, awaiting the arrival of the carriage of the financier's lady. They were aware that her courier and attendants would be well armed, as travelling, since the peace had been signed, and the consequent

disbanding of the soldiers, had become very hazardous; these warriors having by long habit existed by plunder, found it difficult to change their ways. And they deemed it hard indeed if they could not take the same liberty in their own country which they had indulged in others. It was arranged that Bras D'Acier, who with his one eye was an unerring aim with a carbine, should shoot the courier through the head. As they had no great opinion of the valour of the attendants, they determined not to shed their blood unless it should be necessary.

The carriage approached. On entering the forest, Mademoiselle de Rochambeau had remarked to her aunt its extreme distance from any place from whence, in case of danger, they might be able to summon assistance.

"How I wish we could have had Monsieur de Hautefort's protection," she continued, as the carriage rattled along a narrow road, overhung with the dark and heavy branches of the pine; "the forest is so gloomy I dread to look round,

and the birds fly off at our approach, as if they certainly had not lately been accustomed to the presence of human beings in so retired a spot."

"Probably not," replied Madame de Hautefort, gaily; "but our courier is a man of proved courage, on whose fidelity I would stake my very existence; and having most unexpectedly obtained Monsieur de Hautefort's permission to travel to Rheims without him, I am so rejoiced at the idea of a moderate degree of liberty, that you must not expect me to sympathise greatly with your timidity, which I do assure you is unfounded."

Madame de Hautefort was proceeding in her endeavours to inspire her niece with a portion of her own gaiety, when she was suddenly and disagreeably interrupted by the report of fire-arms.

Madame de Hautefort put her head out of the carriage window, and saw her poor courier weltering in his blood from the effects of a ball in his forehead, his foot entangled in the stirrup,

and the scared horse off in full gallop, dragging his late rider after him through bush and brake; this was, indeed, an appalling sight. The postillion instantly stopped—he was a confederate in the pay of the robbers, and the horses had been hired at the Poste Royale. The females were in a state of the most helpless terror; and the two lacqueys, dreading the worst, suffered themselves to be strapped together with a saddle girth, and bound to a tree. Cartouche assisted the ladies to alight, and having conducted them to a recess in the forest, left them with their female servants, guarded by the two brigands who had accompanied the party, until he and Bras D'Acier rejoined them with the booty from the travelling equipage. Cases and trunks then underwent an examination worthy of a Russian frontier custom-house; jewels, gold, and silver were abundant, All being deposited in one place, the robbers at once proceeded to a division of the spoil. Bras D'Acier fired a slug into the trunk of the tree

to which the lacqueys were tied, just above their heads to intimidate them ; Cartouche, however, with an affected feeling of delicacy, determined that the *trousseau* should not be disturbed. In the hearts of the vicious there is a perpetual growth of evil ; the beauty and helplessness of the two ladies had already stung the desires of the ferocious wretch Bras D'Acier, and Etienne, his follower. To the credit of Cartouche, it must be admitted that he resisted sternly and uncompromisingly the design upon the unhappy females who had fallen into their power. Though other atrocities might in abundance be laid to his charge, he had ever been gentle to the sex.

Cartouche remonstrated, but in vain. The female servant being ordered to the carriage, the two ruffians approached the ladies, and, finding their coarse entreaty ineffective, began to use force. An appalling scene ensued ; the struggles, the tears, the screams, the implorations of the intended victims, frantic with fear

and agony, were dreadful indeed. Cartouche could no longer contain his indignation, but rushing on Bras D'Acier, he seized him by his bull's throat, and hurled him to the ground. He then aimed a blow with his sword at Etienne, which, however, had no more material effect than hewing off three of the brigand's fingers, and putting him to a more lasting pain than the deepest love could inflict. At this moment the savage Bras, having raised himself, drew a pistol from his girdle, and pulled the trigger at Cartouche. It was intended for his heart, but the pistol missed fire ; and the life of Cartouche was still protracted. Another of the ruffians now approached, and seemed to be inclined to aid his one-eyed chieftain.

To Louise de Rochambeau prolonged resistance was attributable. Her dignity never deserted her; to the last she encouraged Madame de Hautefort; and when she fell almost fainting to the earth, called down the vengeance of Heaven upon the dastardly

villains who assailed them. Nor was Heaven unmindful of her prayer. A horseman, well armed, having ridden up to the carriage, exchanged some half-dozen words with the female domestics, alighted instantly, released the two lacqueys from their bonds, and ordered them to follow him to the rescue of their mistress. A thunderbolt could not more have stunned the monsters. A few moments more, had it not been for the timely interference of Cartouche, would have enabled them to destroy their victims in the "deep damnation" of their lust.

Cartouche instantly recognised the Count Duchatelet, as the deliverer of the ladies. Etienne and the other brigand hastily retreated into the fastnesses of the forest, the former leaving his fingers behind as a trophy for their adversaries.

"Louise! dearest Louise," said Duchatelet, as he pressed the agitated girl to his heart, "I am here to save, to protect you. Seize the

villains instantly," he exclaimed to the servants, who had now come up; but the gentlemen in livery feeling very sick at the sight of the fire-arms, could not screw up their courage to do the deed, and the Count, relinquishing Mademoiselle de Rochambeau to the care of her aunt, approached the brigands.

"Beware, Count," said Louis Dominique, in a determined tone, "we are desperate men, and have met before; and," he continued, with his usual effrontery, "you, Monsieur Duchatelet, have the advantage of me; you know the ladies, I do not; and I pledge you my honour they should not have been molested had I been aware of their being connections of yours; for my sincerity I need not refer to the past—you recovered your family jewels. Moreover, though we are many to one, for my band are within earshot, you, and all here, are safe. Bras, this is the Count Duchatelet, my friend. Retire, leave us for a while: I will rejoin you." By this unparalleled assurance he covered the

retreat of his comrade, who was not personally known to Duchatelet, but that the Count was known to him was strikingly manifest, from the fierce and malignant expression which mantled over his dingy visage.

"His friend," muttered Bras D'Acier between his teeth, "the son of my bitterest foe, of the Seigneur de Groc, who had me arrested for sheep-stealing, and condemned to five years' torture in the galleys. Vengeance! vengeance!"

"Call me not friend, thou bare-faced impostor," said Duchatelet to Cartouche, overcome with surprise and indignation; "I will hand thee over to justice."

Madame de Hautefort now interfered, and owned the extreme obligations they were under to Cartouche, who had certainly endeavoured to rescue them from horrible peril.

"We shall meet again, Count Duchatelet," said Cartouche, raising his hat, and bowing profoundly to the ladies, he disappeared.

The Count endeavoured for some time, without success, to restore his companions to composure. "You must allow me," he said, "to escort you back to Paris. I have had a long interview with Monsieur de Hautefort since your departure. I hastened to overtake your carriage that I might be fortunate enough to persuade you to return at Monsieur de Hautefort's request; he expressly directed me the very route you had taken, and I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself that I have been of service to one who, henceforth, will be the arbitress of my fate."

Louise de Rochambeau ventured to raise her eyes to the Count's face, but seeing a very strange expression there, she dropped her head upon her aunt's bosom again; we will not trespass so far on our reader's patience as to commit to paper all that was uttered on either side: suffice it to say, that Count Duchatelet,

alarmed at Mademoiselle de Rochambeau's sudden departure, from which he augured that his silent admiration had been observed, hastened to Monsieur de Hautefort, and avowed himself the suitor of his fair niece. The *financier*, who had hitherto imagined that the object of the Count's adoration had been his own wife, was most agreeably relieved by finding out his mistake. He not only gave his unqualified consent to Duchatelet's proposal, but entreated him to follow Madame de Hautefort, and persuade her to return, feeling assured that he should be sufficiently recovered on the morrow to accompany them to Rheims. The Count, of course, joyfully assented to the proposition. That he was only just in time to render them essential service we have already shown. And after conversing on the events of the morning, he escorted them back to Paris, where Monsieur de Hautefort suffered so severe a shock on the recital of their adventure, that his gout forsook him altogether;

and (what was still more agreeable to Madame de Hautefort's feelings) so delighted was he at the safe return of his charming wife, that he vowed never to emit a spark of jealousy again.

CHAPTER XXV.

CARTOUCHE IS ENGAGED IN A CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE REGENT, WHICH FAILS—THE CAUSE—CARTOUCHE PUNISHES A TRAITOR—AND DISAGREEABLY INTERRUPTS A SUPPER.

In the year 1718, there had existed great discontent against the Regent Duke of Orleans: and the intriguing Spanish minister, Alberoni, having put himself in communication with the malecontents, every device was made use of to prevent the King of Spain from acceding to the quadruple alliance, as being too favourable to the Duke of Orleans: and to engage him to demand the convention of the states-general, for the purpose of limiting the authority of the Regent, and of repressing the abuses that disgraced his government.

The Duchess of Maine, who had considered herself highly injured by the Regent, persuaded Monsieur de Malezieu, and Cardinal de Polignac, to compose letters for Philip, who was to send them to the young King, his nephew, to the parliament, and to the states-general themselves.

The Spanish monarch was not only to require that France should reject the quadruple alliance, but in express terms, that the regency should be taken from the Duke of Orleans, on account of the abuses of which he had been guilty, and given to the King of Spain.

The Spanish ambassador was well aware that he could not succeed in an attempt of this magnitude without the assistance of a considerable party; he, therefore, employed himself with the utmost diligence to gain over men of all descriptions—nobility, officers, priests, monks, gentlemen, and magistrates. Cellemare (the Spanish ambassador) did not doubt the successful issue of his project, and gave an account of his progress to Alberoni, who, confiding in his

assurances, considered the Regent as already deposed.

This conspiracy, however, was detected, and tended to accelerate the declaration of war against Spain, which took place at the commencement of the year 1719, when the first hostile operations of Louis the Fifteenth were directed against his uncle, whom Louis the Fourteenth had, at the expense of so much blood and treasure, established on his throne; and their Majesties began to play the interesting game at the expense of the people, wherein provinces are the stakes and men the cards. Masses of human beings were thrown against one another, to procure glory and happiness for their respective nations, and where assemblages of armed troops killed, without knowing one another, in the defence of men whom they scarcely knew.

New discoveries were daily made of Alberoni's intrigues, and his agents even went so far as to

attempt to avail themselves of the services of so notorious a criminal as Cartouche.

A Spaniard, named Alvarez, had long and frequent interviews with Cartouche, with reference to a scheme he had planned—a sweeping measure against the government of the Regent. He proposed, at one blow, to paralyse the entire kingdom. In fact, this personage, whose heart and complexion were both of Ethiopic hue, and who was of Moorish descent, had made up his mind to the assassination of the Duke of Orleans; he also had a list of proscribed nobles, and other persons, who were of the Duke's party, and intended for immolation. Cartouche with his customary ambition—a passion, by the way, adored with the same fervour by heroes and highwaymen, ministers and jugglers, sharpers and contractors—foresaw that, by this bold deed, anarchy would be established in the very heart and soul of all social institutions; and then, in the horrible confusion which would ensue, what a prodigious booty must fall to his

share! All experience proves that crime has no resting place; that the descent from bad to worse is as sure as the contingency of cause and effect. We should almost hesitate to believe that even a monster of villainy, as Cartouche was, could coolly contemplate putting to death the Regent, and principal nobility, and afterwards to out-do all that has been recorded of wholesale robbery. Yet, such was the scheme of Alvarez, which was to be carried into execution by the brigand conspirators, who had frequent midnight deliberations to this dreadful end—to annihilate the man who Voltaire has described "to have been famed for his courage, his wit, and his pleasures; who was born for society, even more than for public affairs, and was one of the most amiable men that ever existed." In the songs sung, in the streets, by the lower orders, the only appellation by which they distinguished him, was that of Philip the *Debonnaire*; but a subsequent celebrated French song writer has remarked that *Debonnaire* is a

surname that has been given to those kings of France, of whom it is not known what to say, but that it was synonymous with imbecile. Certainly, when he came at the head of affairs, he gave the place of minister of marine to the Count de Maurepas, a youth of seventeen years of age!

A cousin of the Count de Maurepas, a Monsieur Duhamel, was very much attached to the Regent, whom he served in the quality of page; although but a young man, his vigilance was equal to his bravery, and being almost always near the person of his royal master, he opposed a barrier to the views of the gang. One of the first conclusions to which the conspirators agreed, was to get rid of Duhamel. A *billet-doux* was written by one of the clever female devils of the atrocious community, making an assignation; the curiosity of the page was excited, and he went to the appointed place in the dusk of the evening, on the Mont Parnasse, behind the Chartreuse, when, instead of meet-

ing, as he anticipated, a beautiful creature who had become enamoured of him, he was, in a dastardly manner, attacked by Bras D'Acier, Ferrand, and Cartouche; they fell on him, and killed him with the butt-ends of their pistols, emptied his pockets, and buried him in a dung-hill. This last act was not so well performed as to prevent a discovery on the following morning.

A gardener, going early to his work, perceived a leg with a silk stocking obtruding from the heap; he searched further, and found the corpse of the unfortunate gentleman, and he immediately ran and communicated the circumstance to the nearest commissary; the body was conveyed to La Morgue, and soon recognised. This murder greatly affected the Regent, and caused so great a sensation, that it acted as a preventative to the immediate proceedings of the conspirators.

A month, however, is an age in the volatile revolutions of public gossip and opinion. This

barbarous murder, was by the end of the month, less than a nine day's wonder.

Cartouche exulted in this last fearful success, and turning his brains to work, he deemed it practicable to destroy the Regent by entrapping him by female lure.

The Duke of Orleans was a general lover, and had many mistresses. One of these fair ladies had particularly fascinated him—Mademoiselle Dagobert, an eminent beauty; and the wily Cartouche proposed that her servants should be secured by liberal bribes. This was effected; the favorite sultana, Dagobert, was surrounded with splendour—carriages, handsomely furnished mansion, *maître d'hôtel*, valets, pages, *femmes de chambre*. One by one were these hirelings assailed, and not proof against the power of gold, were eventually included amongst the associated rogues who moved under the able rule of Cartouche.

But, in the best regulated families, fate will sometimes occasion affairs to fail, or go wrong.

So, as this plot had been not only carefully but expensively concocted, the highly honourable gentleman by whom it had been schemed felt certain of success. He had carried his point so far, that he could be admitted to a cabinet, the door of which opened into the private boudoir of Mademoiselle Dagobert: and he could also be apprised when it was the intention of the Regent to visit the fair object of his *devoirs*. But it happened that all this precaution proved of no avail, for Cartouche was not aware that one of his own associates, the good-looking Ferrand, was deeply enamoured of Mademoiselle Dagobert, and had received many favours of her. Ladies of her class, frequently by inclination, seeking the admiration of the low and depraved, in preference to their betters. One night, in a much more loving fit than usual, and under the influence of wine, Ferrand, in the strictest confidence, and in the hope of saving Mademoiselle Dagobert from the dreadful misfortune which must occur, if anything

untoward should happen to her Royal protector, communicated a portion of the secret to her.

The result of which was, that Mademoiselle, to ingratiate herself with the Regent, alarmed him, and he came no more to her apartments, although he contrived to meet his charmer elsewhere. The Duke, in this state of the affair, could not give any publicity to the plot laid against him.

But there was one terrible witness to the treachery of Ferrand, and that one was Cartouche himself, who, having watched him like a cat, insinuated his person into the cabinet of the boudoir, and overheard the confession of Ferrand to the beautiful Mademoiselle Dagobert.

As he gloomily walked to the place of rendezvous of the brigands, he ruminated within himself, "As woman is the greatest boon conferred on man, and is essential to his happiness, so, to counterbalance such an advantage, there is not a morsel of mischief happens in this

world, but there is a woman at the bottom of it!"

Be it remembered, where, and by whom, this remark was made. There is no country in which more good is said, and more ill thought, of the women, than in France. It is true, there is no country which furnishes more instances to justify the eulogiums of some, and the satires of others.

However Ferrand might have been admired by his leader, as a social companion, it was not in accordance with the "code—Cartouche," to suffer so glaring an infringement of his laws to pass without severe punishment by way of example to the otherwise lawless. The evidence of the guilt of Ferrand was established: and the wretch, unconscious of his detection, was brought before his judges—his infuriated rascally comrades. Ferrand at once saw that his treason had been discovered, but how, he could not divine: and his nerves shook, as he perceived and felt that there was no hope of

mercy for him. The eyes of his late friends expressed all a tiger's thirst of blood. Cartouche, after submitting the miserable being before him to a terrible denunciation, ordered him to be slain on the spot.

After twenty daggers had done their work, Cartouche called for pen, ink, and paper, and affixed the following label to the corpse of poor Ferrand, in a plain and steady hand-writing:—

"*Celui à qui on avait fait ce traitement en était digne; et que tous les traîtres comme lui auraient le même sort!*"

It was thus that the hero of these memoirs imagined that he should render betrayal impossible by the fear which would anticipate a certain and frightful punishment.

The body of Ferrand was then carried in the direction of the Rue du Regard; where it was placed, with the inscription, in the public thoroughfare.

It was to this dreadful extent that Cartouche had the audacity to carry his measures.

Mademoiselle Dagobert, though she had been informed on the main point, was still ignorant of the extent to which her domestics had been bribed and tampered with, and she had desired a *petit souper* to be prepared, as she expected the company of the gay Marquis de Louvois, who had recently returned from England, to a *tête-à-tête* conference ; but she was much confounded when she discovered that almost every one of her servants had absconded from the house. However, the Marquis de Louvois arrived, full-dressed, painted, patched, powdered, and perfumed. Mademoiselle Dagobert apologised to him for the want of her usual attendance ; and knowing the sagacity and experience of the Marquis, she determined to consult him. After he had patiently listened to the whole detail, and a solitary *femme de chambre*, who had ventured to remain, had cleared the supper table, the Marquis drawled out—

" Inestimable creature, I own the contingent

disappearance of your servants is extremely strange; and, I confess, I cannot account for it in any other way, but that it looks extremely like one of the damnable organisations of that devil incarnate, CARTOUCHE!"

"IT IS!" was the answer of a fierce, hoarse, voice, which made them both start from their seats, while, from the door of the boudoir, started a figure well known to Louvois, who exclaimed—

"The Baron de Katzbac de Carouble!"

"The same, my Lord, *alias* Louis Dominique Cartouche! Mark me, Mademoiselle; I know all; the fool that betrayed our secret has been condemned to death, by judgment of his peers; you will, therefore, gain no further information from him. And, if either of you whisper another word of what you suspect in this matter—unless you treat it *as a folly*—you shall pay the penalty with your lives. No more treachery, Mademoiselle; and, my dear Marquis de Louvois, as a memento of your good-will, I

condescend to accept this handsome diamond mounted snuff-box, the crest, ruby, and emerald, beautiful!" and Cartouche coolly pocketed the costly article. "And, by your leave, fair Dagobert, the rings on your fingers are exquisite, and will be tokens of your friendly consideration." Upon this he grasped the lady's hand, and drew off all her rings; he then pressed the hand with an appearance of profound adoration to his lips, and disappeared through the door. The effect of his words, his first terrible glance, his fearful reputation, were magical. A sort of stupor came over both; at length, the Marquis partially recovered, and he exclaimed—

"Well, I vow to Heaven, this has been the most entertaining scene of a comedy I ever beheld in my life!"

About this period the walls were placarded with the bills of the theatre, announcing to the public that a celebrated actress from the provinces was to make her *debut* in Paris. Report had been busy, prior to her arrival, in speaking

of the extraordinary beauty, grace, and activity of Signora Zingara; of the pathos and expression of her pantomime; and that every effort she made appeared to be the effect of natural genius. The curiosity of the play-goers of Paris was excited, and when the important night arrived, the fair *debutante* at once established her power over the spectators, and she became a star of the first magnitude in the theatrical hemisphere. Crowds flocked to see her; presents were showered on her.

When a dramatic, or any other *furor*, is raised in Paris, it never rains but it pours, and Signora Zingara became the pet and pride of the whole populace, from the *noblesse* to the *canaille*.

In the height of this brilliant success, she, all at once, became anxious, thoughtful, and dejected; her admirers could not fathom the cause. But it will occur to the recollection of the reader, that when Cartouche was at Rouen, and met the charming Rose Coquillarde, she in-

formed him that she was yet under a bounden pledge, given in her gipsy days, to one of her own tribe.

The ferocious Bras D'Acier, beholding the immense success that literally followed the footsteps of Rose, determined to put his claim in force, and compel her to fulfil the contract into which she had been entrapped, and marry him; or that he would hang about her, and exact from her all the louis d'ors she could gain by her talents. For this purpose, he took every opportunity he dared publicly to appear, to place himself in her way, and glare with his intolerable single eye upon her.

Although Signora Zingara had a thousand admirers, she was so situated that she did not possess a friend. The young officer of marine to whom she had attached herself, was unfortunately lost; he was killed off Toulon by the English, and Rose never ceased to mourn for him. And what a distressing state of mind that is for a public performer, even when labouring

under deep domestic calamity, to be compelled to assume all the gaiety, to keep up the same spirit before an audience; aye, while the heart's core is wounded and bleeding.

Cartouche, on beholding the name in the play-bills, now recollected his promise to the only female who really had caused an emotion in his breast; and it was not without some surprise that one night as they were quitting the rendezvous, Bras D'Acier followed him, and requested a private interview. They repaired to the private room of a very private wine-house, (receptacle for thieves), when Bras D'Acier, calling for a bottle of his favourite vintage, told Cartouche that he wanted a little service, which he could not perform himself, as, when his education was going on, there had been a slight omission, for his preceptors had totally forgotten to teach him either to read or write; and all he required now, was, that his associate, Cartouche, should pen a *love letter* for him. To this Cartouche readily assented, but being ex-

ceedingly curious as to the style of letter that was to be written, as well as to whom might be the fortunate fair one; he folded a sheet of paper, and fixing his two eyes on the one of Bras D'Acier, informed him that he was ready to indite. This was a word the robber did not quite comprehend: somehow or other he mixed it up with the word *indict*, with which he was much better acquainted. Cartouche then told him plainly that he wished him to word the epistle, and that he would write down all that he said. Upon this, Bras D'Acier rolled his one eye first round the room, and then throwing it up to the ceiling, began as follows:—

"'Girl! If so be as how you don't forget, but remember, perhaps you will recollect that once upon a time you were wedded to me; married over a broom-stick when the Patrico was a-standing by, and witnessed that there, and a bundle of other matches. There was green-nosed Janet, blear-eyed Barbara, and the girl with one arm, as gave their hands at the same time. You can't

get out of this. I hear as how you've served your time with the showman, and now you're a great lady; nobody's not got no claim on you but me, so, for the future, you will look upon me as your lord and master, and I shall look upon you as the woman as is to cook the victuals, pick the chick-a-biddies, and give the donkies their hay when we have any, and make the beasts do without, 'when there's nothing for nobody.'

"'You can't get out of this; for you know three or four other ladies of the tribe were after me for marriage; these was the tall woman with the yellow face, what told fortunes, from Grenoble: and little fat Alice, as made the cabbage nets: besides Anna-Maria, as skinned cats so well, and made them look exact rabbits.'

"'And I forgot to say there was two others, Joan, who cut the butcher's skewers, and Madame La Noix, who used to tickle up the stolen babbies with the walnut peel—'"

Here Cartouche, who had some difficulty in

restraining his laughter, said, "Bras, my good friend, do you call this a love-letter?—Zounds, man, you have not given expression yet, to an atom of ardent passion."

"Passion!" replied D'Acier, "*passion*—no—that is coming bye-and-bye; if she don't pick up her sticks and tramp with the camp, as the saying is—"

"Go on," said Cartouche, rather impatiently.

Bras proceeded with his beautiful dictation.

"'You can't get out of this.'"

"You have repeated that sentence twice before, Monsieur D'Acier."

"I mean to tell her of it a hundred times more; scribble on my boy—"

"'You can't get out of this.' I see you have got to the bottom of the page: just turn over, and begin again at the top—

"'You can't get out of this—'"

"*Sacre!*" exclaimed Cartouche, biting his lips.

"Well! well! don't let my sectarian get

into a rage: let us have another bottle: and now tell her that if she is getting two hundred livres a month, that I mean to have one hundred and ninety-seven of them: for I am her lord and master, and according to Bohemien law, SHE IS MY SLAVE!"

"Slave!" ejaculated Cartouche.

"Yes," said Bras D'Acier: "by our laws, established for a thousand years by our dark-browed ancestors; she is my bounden slave—I have power over her life. If Rose Coquillarde fails in her duty to me, as her affianced husband, why—here's the *cutter* that settles the question."

This paragon of sentimental, devoted, and gentle swains now dropped an ugly-looking large knife into the wine he had spilled on the table.

"And your intention is, Bras," said Cartouche, "to annoy, perhaps annihilate, feed and fatten on the proceeds of the labour of this

highly fortunate but, as regards you, singularly unhappy female?"

"Decidedly, Monsieur Louis Dominique Cartouche," replied the ruffian.

"Well, then," said Cartouche, "I, your leader, set my face against it."

"I don't care what you set against it," remarked Bras; "it will neither answer your purpose nor mine."

"You are an obstinate fool," continued Cartouche; "but, if I have a spark of knight-errantry in me, by the Lord you shall do no harm to Rose Coquillarde. When you, you thief, robbed me of the first money that I ever stole, that dear girl left me a crown to get me bread. Robber as I am, the recollections of boyhood are not yet erased, and the events of that night are perfectly vivid to me; not forgetting, old gentleman, the hearty larrupping you intended to inflict with your leathern belt—and which my beautiful Rose threw into the soup marmite."

"*Your* beautiful Rose," said Bras D'Acier! "who, in the name of hell, made her yours?"

"Hark ye, comrade: she is none of mine, but as she does not appear to have a friend to protect her, I shall oppose myself to your attacks which could only end in her utter ruin; she stands a good chance of making her way honestly in the world, now, and your threatened conduct may drive her to desperation. You must give up all thoughts of her."

Bras was staggered with surprise.

"Nay, more than that," continued Cartouche, "you must hand over to me the pledge which was extorted from Rose, and put into your possession, that she may not be uneasy in mind, even about 'gipsy law.'"

"And who is to make me do all this?" growled Bras D'Acier.

"I will," replied Cartouche; "deliver me the promise and the ring, now, this moment, or I will denounce you; I know your secret—I have the proofs—living evidence. Give me the ring,

I say, or you will compel me to have you arrested on the charge of poisoning YOUR OWN MOTHER AND SISTER."

The lower jaw of the ruffian dropped convulsively. "Hold! hold!" he muttered.

"Obey me, then," said Cartouche, "and by so doing, close my lips; if I make up my mind to a point, I care not at what hazard I carry it. I would risk my own neck to place your's in a halter. Give me the pledge?"

Bras D'Acier, stupified, took a small bag from his bosom, and handed it across the table to Cartouche. "There, there it is; never more speak of the poison—never more—"

"You know I will keep my word," replied Cartouche.

On the following day this singular man inquired for the dwelling of Signora Zingara, but being a stranger, had a difficulty in gaining access, as the poor girl was in such a state of horror and alarm lest she should be forcibly assailed by the gipsy ruffian, that no one was

admitted; indeed, she hardly dared to venture from her lodging to the theatre.

Cartouche was, however, pertinacious, and insisted on seeing her; he told her attendant to mention the words "*Reine Moulin.*"

This pass-word having been carried into the Signora, she was seized with a fit of violent trepidation and anxiously inquired, if the stranger had but one eye?

The servant was astonished at this query, but instantly replied that he had two, and that they were exceedingly keen and piercing. Cartouche was then admitted, and was kindly welcomed by the lovely Rose.

She appeared to be surrounded by luxury; this mere gipsy girl had so fascinated the Parisians with her surpassing talent, that she had been loaded with presents; jewellery, clocks, china, artificial flowers under glass cases, rare living birds, marmosets, and grey squirrels; every chair was covered with splendid dresses, silks, velvets, and feathers.

"Permit me first to congratulate you on your good fortune," said Cartouche, "and having done so, to fulfil a promise I made, when I last had the pleasure to see you at Rouen."

"Merciful powers," exclaimed Rose, in an agitated tone; "do you mean to assure me that you have been successful in obtaining the *gage* from my bitterest foe?"

"Here it is," replied Cartouche; giving it to her.

"Then know my benefactor," said she, "that there is now no drawback to my happiness save one sad thought," and here the tears suffused her eyes. "For he——whom I loved——is dead."

Recovering herself, she paused a moment, and continued—"The restoration of these gives tranquility to my mind: the hated wretch will not pursue me more."

"I do not think he will ever trouble you again," said Cartouche. "If he does, I will hang him."

"And now, Monsieur, in what way can I requite you for this strong proof of your kindness, and sincere friendship? I have wealth pouring in: pardon me, can I aid your purse to any extent you may require?"

Cartouche replied with more emotion than any one would have given him credit for: "Alas! fair creature, if ever I felt repentance for my deeds, it is at this moment. Were I an honest man, I would live but to gain your esteem—your love. The greatest charity I can do you is, never to behold you more. A friendship or acquaintance with me would blight your prospects for ever. I am a notorious, a proscribed criminal: I appear hitherto to have had a charmed life, the end of which must arrive, and I shall perish on the scaffold, unless a fortunate bullet should penetrate my worthless heart or head. The greatest gratification I have felt, has been in becoming the humble means of adding to your happiness, and removing the weight that depressed your spirits.

Farewell! Rose. I will not taint you with my touch. Farewell for ever; unless, again, Bras D'Acier dares to harm you. Farewell!"

Here Cartouche rapidly quitted her, and regained the street.

"If it might be," said Rose, pursuing the train of thought which his words had aroused, "if it might be; if he could perceive his error, repent, reform, *one* heart that beats with friendship and gratitude towards him, would urge him to the path of virtue; would love, would cherish him! But the means of withdrawing him from his associates: alas! he is too deeply pledged, too far involved. And yet I could forgive him all if he would say, with truth, 'Rose, I do repent.' I would not blame him for having yielded to temptation, I would not chide him for the evil he has done, and for which he never can make reparation, but I would encourage him, tend him, cheer him; the love of woman should change the current of his life, and the tide should flow back again to virtue."

Such were the reflections of the *actress*. The gay, admiring, and not always discerning world, would have given her the credit—had her words been trumpetted forth among the *nouvelles* of the day—of wearing the mask, even to the mirror of her own soul. But there was truth and fidelity within her heart that the world dreamt not of. She was Cartouche's earliest friend, the last, the truest; and she alone, of all that had even been connected with him by the ties of blood or friendship, mourned, long and bitterly, at the fate he had himself predicted in their last interview.

The gentle and innocent Mandrin, who had never visited Paris before, was now introduced by Cartouche to some of the ladies who were in the least request by the police: and was by them taken to view all the lions of the metropolis: during which he highly amused his fair companions by the dexterity he exhibited, even to their practised eyes, in the art of picking pockets. During this sight-seeing, business

was not neglected: and Mandrin brought home to the rendezvous, eleven watches, six gold and silver snuff boxes (he would not condescend to touch those of *papier-machée* any more than he would finger a valueless *assignat*), and sundry purses found their way into his pocket, absent without leave of their disconsolate owners.

The ladies, one and all, vowed that he had the lightest finger and prettiest style they had ever met: in fact, he had created the greatest sensation with them, as his mode was perfectly original; he thoroughly excelled in the brilliant, and, like a first-rate harpsichord player, the strength and equality of his *fingering* were among the distinguishing features of his playing. His execution was perfect, but his good sense taught him that great velocity renders it next to impossible to *touch* with delicacy: and is only resorted to by those who are conscious of possessing none of the higher and intellectual

powers, and who are obliged to supply the want of *deep feeling* by *manual dexterity*.

Mandrin was a feature at the midnight table: he could relate so many strange tales, that if we were not engaged in penning a history of Cartouche, we must have turned at once to write the biography of Mandrin.

The robbers, one evening, had each related some odd event that had occurred to them, when Mandrin said, "Gentlemen appropriators, if you will do me the favour to listen to a queer adventure of mine, certainly sought by myself, you will own that I hit on the means of gratifying a noble revenge.

"Through the agency of a grasping priest at Auxerre, I was defrauded of the little patrimony that was to come to me. For on the death-bed of my father, this same prelate, who was his confessor, before he would administer the final consolations, made him revoke his will, which was in my favour, and on account of my indiscretions, which he termed vicious and sinful

habits, he caused my poor father, in his debilitated state, to sign a fresh testamentary document: by which his property was left to the Abbey of St. Germain, so celebrated for its crypts, in which were the bodies of no less than sixty saints, and a prodigious quantity of holy relics."

"Auxerre," said Cartouche, "aye, that is from whence we get our *Chablis* wine, and the *Côte de la chênette*, and *Côte de la mégrène*."

"Yes, and I am afraid it was the *chênette*, and the *mégrène* that rather dissipated my youthful days," continued Mandrin. "But, however, my father went the way of all flesh, and I was mopped out, and drained dry, by the advice my parent followed.

"I, naturally enough, conceived an implacable hatred against the priest in question, and racking my brains, I formed a singular design of avenging myself.

"Auxerre was (and it may be now, for what I care) a most superstitious place, and when

anybody died, it was customary to carry the corpse into the church on the evening previous to the day of interment; where, in an open coffin, a priest, attended only by a boy of the choir, remains all night praying by the side of the dead body, and on the following day the friends of the deceased came to close up the coffin and inter the body.

"I waited patiently until a funeral ceremony of this nature was to take place, when I had ascertained that Père Augustin (my bitter foe) took his turn of duty, and had the all-night affair in charge. A young fellow had died, with whom in his life-time I was acquainted, and he was conveyed in the coffin to the church. On this occasion, after the evening service had been performed, every one retired from the church, myself excepted, for I found means effectually to conceal my person.

Père Augustin and the young chorister then went to their supper: and I seized on this moment of the retirement of the priest, to strip

myself to my shirt, tie a white handkerchief round my face, and withdrawing the dead body from the coffin, I hid it under a form and several rush-chairs, and placed myself in its stead,

"Père Augustin and the boy were not long before they returned; and the former commenced the usual prayers. But oh! marvellous! miraculous! what was his astonishment when he beheld *me*, the dead body, rise from the coffin, and advance towards him. Terrified in the extreme, the priest flew to the font, and conjuring the corpse to return to its proper station, showered holy water on him in abundance. But the obstinate and disobedient dead body, evil-minded, disregarding the power of holy water, seized the unfortunate priest, threw him to the ground, and slipping a halter with a noose round his neck, attempted to strangle him. I thought I had left him extended on the pavement without life! and to deceive the only witness, the chorister boy, I walked back quietly, and re-entered the coffin.

Presently I heard the boy in a state of direful alarm scuttle out of the church; no time was to be lost, I rapidly restored the corpse to its place, and got, unperceived, out of the church.

"The chorister lad went to his home, and raised an alarm; he brought down several of the clergy of St. Germain, and they found Père Augustin, still on his back, a rope drawn tightly round his throat; he had swooned only.

"Nothing could throw any light on this extraordinary event but the testimony of the boy who had concealed himself on the first movement of the dead body, and who persisted in declaring that he saw, from his hiding place, Père Augustin strangled by the corpse. Conjectures and endeavours to discover the truth were alike vain, tormenting, and fruitless.

"Many resources were tried, for although in so superstitious a town as Auxerre, it was not every one that submitted himself to the belief of a dead body rising to kill a priest, and then quietly resigning itself to the place of its

consignment: for the friends of the deceased certainly came in the morning to attend the funeral, and as certainly interred the body of their friend.

"As for Père Augustin, he was so scandalised by the wonderful affair, and having had his life attempted by a dead man, and a halter tied tightly round his neck, that he could never hold up his head again. The miraculous tale spread far and wide; the boys pointed at him in the street; the old women shuddered whenever they beheld him; he was himself bewildered in conjecture, he had beheld the corpse rise from the coffin, with his own eyes. His whole fraternity looked upon him with dread and contempt, and, at length, his life became so unbearable, that it was a mercy to him that the bishop of the diocese ordered Père Augustin into a public receptacle for lunatic monks, where he ended his days."

"Bravo, bravo, Mandrin," exclaimed simultaneously all the *bravoes*.

CHAPER XXVI.

ENGLISH CHARACTER IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY—A NERVOUS TRAVELLER—THE ADVANTAGES OF GOOD PRINCIPLE—AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR—THE CONSEQUENCES—TWO OF CARTOUCHE'S GANG ARE ARRESTED.

About this period Monsieur d'Argenson, finding that foreigners, visiting Paris, fell more particularly into the clutches and snares of the organised band of thieves, devoted a considerable portion of his time and attention to the discovery of some means of protection for the unhappy persons who were thus peculiarly entitled to his sympathy and care.

Englishmen—whatever they may be now—were not then considered, on the continent, as enlightened and intellectual travellers, but were

rather victimised by the landlords and tradesmen into whose hands they fell, and laughed at, and despised, when their devoted backs were turned; and, above all, when their originally well-lined pockets were empty. And yet the charm of novelty, and getting rid, for the time, of some dull every-day employment, drew many people to Paris, who would have been far happier, and more comfortable, and much better respected, had they stayed beside their own hearths, and contented themselves with their own simple enjoyments; in the eighteenth century, these usually consisted of a couple of bottles of old port, *per diem*, punch and porter *ad libitum*, a joint of meat and a pudding, a game of bowls, Pope Joan (or piquet to the more refined members of the community), a very long doze after dinner that lasted until a hot supper time arrived, a capacious down bed, and a bad night's rest. At this period a country gentleman was estimated in society by the quantity of wine he could drink himself, and by

what he could make his guests drink. These two important points comprehended not only the cardinal virtues, but such minor considerations as good nature, sociability, intellect, and education, which were all sunk in that part of his hospitality which included the liberality of his potations. The life of a country squire was then passed in a state of indolence and downright inactivity, conducive to drowsiness, dyspepsia, obesity, and never ending languor, unless he happened to be attached to field sports. Travels of the country squire seldom exceeded the distance of the country town, and that only at assize or session time, or to attend an election. Once a week he commonly dined at the next market town with the attornies and justices. He went to church regularly, read the weekly journal, settled the parochial disputes between the parish officers at the vestry, and afterwards adjourned to the neighbouring ale-house, where he usually got drunk for the good of his country. A journey to London was, by one of these men,

reckoned as great an undertaking as is at present a voyage to the East Indies. The country clergyman was contented with *doing his duty* on a Sunday only, and becoming the willing guest of his friend, the squire, six days in the week. The country apothecary was satisfied with mixing phials full of liquid that never did any harm, if it did not chance to do much good.

These were odd times; and although during this and the preceding reigns more men of talent and genius lived among their fellows than before or since, we cannot discern that the general mass were well acquainted with them; for they appeared to frequent the coffee-houses in the society of each other—Congreve, Farquhar, Steele, Vanburgh, Addison, Swift, Prior, Rowe, Pope, Parnel, Garth, Gay, Dr. Bentley, Sir Christopher Wren, Davenant, Bolingbroke, John Locke, Whiston, Atterbury, Wallis, Halley, Hamstead, Shaftsbury, Phillips, Dr. Friend, and Dr. Mead.

Most certainly the retired Englishman, of

whom we are now about to relate an anecdote connected with the history of Cartouche, did not boast of the private acquaintance of any of the above-named worthies.

Among a vast number of individuals who were thrown out of their usual track by the fluctuations of the South Sea bubble, and among the few who experienced any permanent change in their circumstances, was Isaac Bussock, a citizen a trifle past the prime of life, very stout, very good-natured, very suspicious, and very hypochondriacal. He had speculated merely *pour passer le temps* in the South Sea funds; he had previously acquired, by a species of honest indolent industry, a respectable competence, in the possession of which he was not a bit happier or more contented. He had now realised a sufficient income to enable him to dispense with any further attention to business; he accordingly disposed of his stock, and his good-will, and his good spirits with them—for ever afterwards he became a nervous, excitable

being, with the constitution of a horse, and a face ruddy with undoubted good health. In this melancholy state of affairs, his would-be sunken eye caught the plump, well-rounded form, and the cherry cheek, of the wife of one Alderman Gubbins, who had just married (for the fourth time) the eldest of a numerous family of seven daughters, who thought herself the luckiest of mortals in having caught the alderman's attention, and obtaining a prospect of half the civic chair *in futuro*. Mr. Isaac Bussock regretted daily, nightly, and bitterly, having so far forgotten his dignity, as to acknowledge to himself his admiration for a married lady, the wife of an intimate friend, a pattern of everything that was amiable and excellent, save—as Mr. Bussock in the height of his vanity would sometimes suspect—in not exactly condemning the passion her charms had created in his susceptible heart. It, therefore, only remained with him to withdraw himself from their influence, to endeavour to cram

down reflection with change of diet ; principle came to his aid, principle enabled him to undertake the dangerous journey across a desolate country to Dover ; principle sustained him during a disagreeable passage to the opposite shores; principle seated him in the *diligence*, and conveyed him to Paris ; and principle would, must, and *should*, support him in his trials and dangers there ! Still Mr. Bussock's excessive nervousness did not give way under the sudden change of scene and climate, but rather seemed to increase when he reached the capital, with more money than he could possibly have any need for, and abundance of trunks and portmanteaus carefully double-locked and padlocked.

Mr. Isaac Bussock took up his residence at the Hotel de Bruxelles, where he stayed a day and a half ; but happening to experience a difficulty in opening his dressing-case (in which a considerable sum of money was deposited), he immediately got the idea into his head that the

lock had been tampered with, and settled himself the same afternoon in private apartments, in an unfrequented fauxbourg, to be out of the reach of mischief.

No sooner had he arranged his luggage comfortably, inspected his dressing-room, to be sure that there were no unseen doors, no sliding panels by which any tricks might be played on his property, he congratulated himself that the rooms were but meanly furnished, from which he augured that the hostess, though poor, was honest, and would be faithful to his interests, provided he made it worth her while to remain so.

At this moment the very person he was thinking about (his hostess) entered the room—a circumstance which not a little startled and agitated him—to announce that a gentleman was waiting below who wished to speak to Isaac Bussock. "I don't know anybody in the place," exclaimed the *voyageur*, nervously; "but whoever he may be—suspense is terrible—show him up."

A tall good-looking man, with a shrewd penetrating eye, and enveloped in a large cloak, entered the room, bowed politely, and very gravely drew from his pocket a gigantic *souvenir*.

"You, Monsieur," he said, at length, "are Mr. Isaac Bussock?"

"That is my name, Sir," replied the person addressed, with a fluttering heart.

"I would wish to say a few words to you—are you quite certain we cannot be overheard?"

"God bless my soul," said Mr. Bussock, "I am not sure of anything of the sort."

The stranger stalked majestically round the room, applied his ear to the key-holes of each of the doors, and concluded with offering his snuff-box to the astonished Englishman.

"My name, Sir, may not be unknown to you—it is De Cachet."

"De Cachet," said Mr. Bussock, "don't recollect that I ever heard it before."

Monsieur De Cachet smiled.

"I am an emissary of Monsieur d'Argenson, the minister of police."

"The deuce you are!" ejaculated the nervous man, the cold perspiration running down his forehead. "What, on earth, can I have done to offend the French police?"

"You are probably aware," continued De Cachet, "that so exquisitely organised is the plan of Monsieur d'Argenson's administration of justice, that he is enabled not only to detect offenders but to prevent the commission of crime."

"Indeed!" was all that Mr. Bussock, with increasing agitation, could get forth.

The police emissary referred to his book. "You have stated your name to be Isaac Bussock. You have lately retired from business, having realised a considerable fortune by the South Sea scheme in England. You left London in consequence of a little—"

"I did, Sir," interrupted Bussock, eagerly. "What, in the name of goodness, does all this lead to?"

"Simply to this, Sir; in consequence of your being the person here described, I have the honour to inform you that you will be robbed and probably murdered to-night!"

"What?"

"Inevitably."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Bussock, speaking as if he was being suddenly suffocated.

"Very possible," replied De Cachet, with imperturbable gravity, "provided I, Monsieur d'Argenson's principle emissary, do not exert myself to prevent it."

"Then I hope you will, Sir," said Bussock. "I wish I had never come—I'll quit this place directly."

"If you do," interrupted De Cachet, "I will not answer for your safety. Fear nothing, I can attend personally to this little affair this evening."

"Do you call my murder a little affair?" exclaimed the Englishman. "Good Heavens! how I shall be missed. Mrs. Gubbins and

Alderman Gubbins—oh dear! my principle has been the cause of this—"

"Calm your agitation," said the emissary. "Conduct yourself with your usual cheerfulness. I venture to assure you that your property, perhaps your life, depend upon your acting as if you were perfectly unconcerned. Go to bed at your usual hour."

"Never to get up again," said Bussock. "Suppose you were in my situation, Monsieur de Scratchey, what the deuce should you think?"

"I should look quietly, calmly, immoveably, upon the whole thing," replied the emissary. "If you value your existence, this timely information, or my future aid, you will not intrust this secret of any living being—above all not a word to the mistress of the house. The police agents will be near you in the hour of danger—adieu!" and De Cachet bowed profoundly, and, with a look of ineffable gravity, turned, and left the room.

Here was a situation for a man so painfully and susceptibly nervous as Monsieur Bussock felt himself to be. He threw himself back in his chair in an agony of horror and anxiety. Oh, if he had but been allowed to communicate the fatal secret to somebody. The awful importance attached to the idea, that he alone (excepting Monsieur De Cachet and the intended assassins) was aware that a frightful murder *might* be committed that night—and if it *should* so chance, he himself would be the victim! What would Mrs. Gubbins, and Alderman Gubbins say?

The pretty little dinner, consisting merely of half a dozen dishes from a first-rate *restaurateur's,* went away untouched; the bottle of Burgundy fared better. After mature consideration, Mr. Bussock determined that without some little support his frame would sink, and his mind would go altogether. As the shades of night drew slowly on, he made several arrangements for his personal safety—he ex-

amined the locks of the doors, the fastenings of the windows; in the extremity of anxiety he pressed every minute underneath the table, fancying he felt something touching his feet; the chairs appeared to move; the curtains of his bed became, to his disordered vision, inflated with robbers; he drew his sword, which had never with one exception been out of his scabbard, and pierced the mattrass with it, under the idea that the sheets and counterpane were heaving convulsively; he was too nervous to summon the landlady; she might be in the plot against his life!

The clock chimed the half hour after eleven. "*Go to bed at your usual hour,*" were the simple but impressive words of De Cachet. There was no disguising the truth; it *was* his usual hour. Mr. Bussock wished for a bullet proof night-cap; a marble mortar would have kept his head warm on such a night as this. "No matter," he reflected— "I'll go to bed with my clothes on.—If I am to die I shall

look better with my cravat on—if I am to live I shall be ready dressed for my journey back again to England to-morrow morning." Mr. Bussock accordingly placed the light on the dressing-table, and after putting on his night-cap and *robe de chambre*, stepped tremblingly into bed. A brace of pistols were deposited by the side of the candle, and his sword was grasped in his hand.

The wind blew mournfully in at the key-holes; Mr. Bussock fixed his eyes upon one nearly opposite his bed. It was large enough to admit the barrel of a pistol. Three quarters past eleven struck. The time was approaching. Mr. Bussock's respiratory organs were in full exertion; they sounded in his ears like a pair of bellows; his heart thumped first against his back-bone, and then against his left hand, which was pressed against his side with the view of protecting the organ of life. The silence, at last, grew positively insupportable. "I must break it in some way," thought Mr. Bussock;

"I can't talk aloud for I shall not know what I am saying. To occupy the mind I have heard it's a good thing to count numerically—I'll try—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine! Good Heavens! how near the time is coming! Ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen! Surely that was a noise somewhere; Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen!—Somebody once prophesied I should die in my bed!—Eighteen! —Where was I?—Oh! nineteen, twenty, twenty-one!—" Suddenly the light went out—the window had by some unseen means been opened on the outside—somebody *was* in the room! Mr. Bussock felt as if he had been pinioned down to the bed; he tried, in vain, to seize his pistols—to raise his sword—even to lift the curtain up. He opened his parched mouth twice, but no sound came; the third time, he made a prodigious effort. "Help! help! Monsieur de Cachet! I am murdered!" He needed not to call a second time. The active police-officer was already on the spot. Mr. Bussock closed

his eyes for a moment, as he afterwards said, that he might not see himself die ; and when he opened them again, the light of three or four lanthorns discovered in the room two officers of the police, guarding, with their usual care, a gentlemanly-looking thief, known to our readers by the name of Dumesnil, and in the adjoining room was his companion Charette, under equally safe custody. Monsieur de Cachet's stately figure in Bussock's eyes resembled that of a protecting angel. "Twelve o'clock," exclaimed the English traveller, "and I am yet alive. Monsieur de Cachet, I'm in such an excited state, that if you don't stay and sup with me, I shall go out and cut open a portmanteau, or commit a murder myself." The emissary bowed, apologised, and departed with his prizes.

The next day Mr. Bussock set off on his return to England. Unfortunately, we are not in possession of any authentic records from which we can gather at what period he met Mrs. Gubbins again. That lady afterwards

became Lady Mayoress; and we have reason to believe that Mr. Isaac Bussock entered public life again, was elected alderman, and on the sudden death of his brother Gubbins, shared the civic dignity with his plump, cherry-cheeked widow.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CARTOUCHE IS WOUNDED—DESCRIPTION OF HIS MEDICAL ADVISER—THE UNEMPLOYED SURGEON'S PRAYER—CARTOUCHE AND THE PHILOSOPHIC ABBÉ—MANDRIN CONFESSES THE SINS OF SOMEBODY ELSE, PUBLICLY.

In one of his night adventures, Cartouche was stabbed through the upper part of his arm. Indeed it was a wonder that he had not been oftener hurt.

The wound which Cartouche had received was not to be neglected; with his ardent temperament, loose mode of living, and feverish excitement, a natural healing was scarcely probable. He discovered that he must put himself under the hands of a surgeon.

He had resources for every occasion; and

amongst his acquaintance was a young practitioner, who having been unlucky in the commencement of the arduous duties of his profession—in fact, in letting blood from a patient, he had unfortunately opened an artery, instead of the vein—and this serious accident had occurred, because in his studies he was not sufficiently patient in lancing the minute fibres of a cabbage-leaf. The unlucky young surgeon was duly avoided after this misfortune, which proved to be more serious to him, as he was *alive*, than to the gentleman invalid who bled to *death*.

No one would trust him to physic even their servants: he had no other profession to which he could turn his hand. Medical men must eat. So our poor surgeon went lower and lower, was called in to attend sick cats, dropsical dogs, and melancholy monkeys, the latter always exhibiting the alarming prognostic of going off, by beginning to eat their own tails, thus preparing for their *end*.

From this practice on animals, being employed to set the leg of a blind beggar's dog, whose master had unwarily trod on its paw in the dark, he again elevated himself by prescribing for the beggars themselves, who, generally speaking, provided they do not drink too much, are a healthy race: this increase of business soon led the way to further elevation, for it introduced him to the community about whom we have penned so many pages; and he became surgeon in ordinary to the associated body of Parisian thieves. Consequently, Cartouche was domiciled in a secret apartment in the surgeon's dwelling, and passed an inactive life, very much to his annoyance. For he had no great amusement at having nothing else to look at but preserved snakes in a bottle, and a calf with two heads, a scull of an idiot grinning horribly at him, distorted bones, hand-saws, and other instruments of torture for unhappy patients. He was precluded by the inflammation of his wound from resorting to his usual remedy for

ennui—wine or brandy. And he had only to sit still and ruminate.

The man who had committed crime on so large a scale could not endure long to think. He revolved in his mind his numberless nefarious deeds, and he could recollect but one solitary good act to counterbalance them; and that was relieving the heart of Rose Coquillarde from despair and misery.

All else was foul, dark, selfish: he had imbued his hands in human blood: he was haunted by the forms of Ferrand, with twenty wounds in his breast and neck: and he shuddered as he again beheld the horrible gash in the throat of the stock-broker.

Deprived of his usual excitement, he sunk to despondency.

> "High minds of native pride and force,
> Most deeply feel thy pangs, Remorse!
> Fear for their scourge, mean villains have;
> Thou art the torturer of the brave."

Was repentance within his reach? No, he

had plunged too deeply into guilt; he had no hope of mercy from God or man!

"Oh wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul; that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe."

After three or four hours passed in this miserable state of feeling, he was interrupted by the bare-boned surgeon, who came to dress his wound, and who, while with his want of skill was torturing the yet unhealed cut in his arm, poured forth a number of nauseous moral ejaculatory sentences—for it should be known that this professor of anatomy had became latterly very pious; he found that this line of conduct answered exceedingly well in the improvement of his practice. If there is any time when a sinner should smart in mind, it should be when he is under suffering of body; ghostly advice is then received with a sort of double relish.

Cartouche bore the dressing to his hurt—and another dressing he received, intended for his

conscience—with a sullen silence that in no way marked his gratitude for either.

The dog-doctor then bidding him good night, entered an inner room, which served as his sleeping-place, of which the door was left partially open, in case the surgeon's services should be required by the patient at any hour.

Presently, Cartouche was somewhat surprised to behold the surgeon withdraw a curtain, behind which was placed a carved figure of St. Como, the holy patron of chirurgeons in general, and lighting two tapers on the table before it, the pious medical student, falling on his knees, repeated audibly and fervently the following extempore prayer:—

"Oh! most puissant Saint Como, grant my petition, which, in all loving-kindness to my fellow-creatures, I humbly address to you. May it please you in your goodness to cut off all the rival surgeons in this neighbourhood, or to inflict them with blindness or paralysis, so that their business may fall into the hands of your

most unworthy servant. I pray you grant me the blessing of many accidents befalling people in the streets, so that my hands may be kept in active and profitable employ; that drivers of carriages may become careless, and children more heedless than ever, that they may stand the chance of being run over, and brought into my premises for medical aid; and likewise that such children be not the offspring of the poor, but the scions of the wealthy, who would be enabled to pay liberally for my attendances.

"And moreover, oh, blessed Saint! that you will grant such weather, or other causes, that may rapidly produce fevers, colds, rheumatisms, throughout the quarter in which I reside, so that my mixtures and medicines may be in constant requisition; and grant, my tutelar patron, that all rich citizens may, by good cheer, eat themselves into surfeits, pleurisies, and gout, and that their excellent ladies may once in a year, at least, require my services in the obstetric art. And may it please you to ordain that all old

people should linger on with racking pains in their bones, and everlasting coughs; so that my drops and liniments should come by degrees into general and indispensable use.

"And, oh! for my especial gratification, grant the boon that the plague should find its way into our part of Paris, that I, with a strong arm, may either stay its virulence, or, as occasion may suit, propagate its progress. Grant that the plums and other fruits may remain unripe, so as to cause internal disorders to the ninety-nine out of a hundred of the incautious feeders thereon. Deign to permit that all children born in the district may be able to talk before they can walk, whereby they may be supposed to be affected with that admirable disorder termed the *rickets*, that I may be enabled profitably to supply the necessary bolsters and bandages suited to the parts, such as straight boots, machines of pasteboard, whalebone, or tin, in order to reduce the distorted bones to their natural situation. May it please you, in your benevolence, to give

a wide spread to the itch, and to all other cutaneous diseases. Grant that there may be no end to dislocations and fractures, and that a thousand persons may want their teeth drawn daily. Remembering in all this, oh! holy Saint Como, that I do not ask for devastating death, but only that I may have the opportunity of performing many wonderful cures, and receiving my fees for the same."

Upon which, this pattern of surgeons rose from his knees, put out his tapers, and retired composedly to rest; perfectly convinced in his own mind that he had sent up a very proper and praiseworthy appeal to his patron saint.

"Well," thought Cartouche, to himself, and spite of his pain, he could not avoid smiling, "if that is praying, keep me from it." And it must be owned that the whole tenor of the petition appeared to be framed more for the advantage of the individual in particular, than for the benefit of the Parisian public in general. It is late in the pages of our history to moralise, but

we apprehend that in the prayer of the almost unemployed surgeon, there are too many imitative examples in the world, in all occupations and professions.

Cartouche contrasted in his own mind the utter selfishness of the surgeon, with the philosophic carelessness of a learned abbé he once attempted to rob. The Abbé Privat de Molieres was a man of distinguished literary abilities, but extremely poor (this was unknown to the robber). In the winter he was obliged to write and read in bed, not having any other means to defend himself from the rigour of the season. He was professor of philosophy at the Royal College, and seldom went from the room he had there. One day Cartouche knocked at his chamber-door ; the Abbé opened it, and Cartouche demanded the philosopher's purse. As De Molieres was more attached to his studies than to his money, he, with his usual *sang froid*, said, " Open one of the drawers of my *escritoire*, and take whatever you find." Cartouche,

mistaking the drawer, pulled out a number of manuscripts; the learned Abbé perceiving the confusion which Cartouche was making among his papers, very gravely said, "Oh! Sir, you have mistaken the drawer, and you will give me a great deal of trouble."

Cartouche, more desirous for money than papers, ransacked the poor Abbé of what he had, and went off without shutting the door. The philosopher called after him: "Monsieur le Voleur, be at least polite, shut my door, for it is extremely cold."

Cartouche laughed within himself at the notion of the Abbé, and his progress in repentance and reformation was like that of the pilgrim sent to Jerusalem by Catherine de Medicis, who made a vow, that if some concerns she had undertaken terminated successfully, she would despatch a pilgrim to the holy city, who should walk thither; and every three steps he advanced, he should go one back. So, our hero, if he made any sort of pilgrim's pro-

gress towards a more salutary train of thought was certain to take the one step backwards.

A week passed in inactivity. Cartouche tried in vain to amuse himself with walking up and down his solitary apartment, and wondering where on earth his numerous friends could be, that they did not visit him. At dusk, one evening, the surgeon in some trepidation announced a visitor to his patient; who inquired rather eagerly, what kind of person he was?

"A tall good-looking countryman," replied the surgeon, "with red hair, and blue eyes."

Cartouche rapidly ran over the features of the gang, with the view of ascertaining if any one of them had the first-named trifling peculiarity. No!

"Cartouche, my boy," exclaimed a merry voice without, which the person addressed immediately recognised as belonging to his country-acquaintance, Mandrin—"I have come to see you; I have walked up and down a dozen streets that nobody might follow me here."

"Come in, and welcome," said Cartouche, in a melancholy voice. "My dear Mandrin, I am in the depths of despair. My arm done up, (as you see) my spirits done up—(as you shall hear). My friends have forsaken me; left me to perish alone, of a wound nearly an inch long—as if such a thing were worth dying with. I am afraid to offer you anything in the way of wine, because as you are probably aware —my friend here is a concoctor of draughts; and might, perhaps, ingeniously contrive to add you to the number of his patients living and dead."

"But I am frightfully thirsty," interrupted Mandrin, "and I feel almost inclined to venture. Come hither, friend," he added to the surgeon; "hast thou such a thing as a flask of wine on thy premises?"

The medical man answered in the affirmative.

"Fetch it quickly, then," said Cartouche.

The wine was produced. Mandrin looked

fixedly at the bottle, and then at the surgeon, and after a long pause, asked permission to feel his pulse. The surgeon acquiesced in some astonishment; and Mandrin placed his fingers on his thin, bony wrist. "We are safe," said Mandrin, after counting seventy. "The wine, such as it is, is unadulterated. Cheer up, my friend; you recollect your introducing to me, when we met accidentally, a gentleman with one eye—I forget his name."

"Bras D'Acier," suggested Cartouche.

"The same," replied Mandrin. "I saw this highly respectable person in the Bois de Boulogne to-day, and I ventured to inquire of him, in *argot*, where you were, and what you were doing? He, in *argot*, ventured to hint where I might possibly find you—and here I am. What shall we do to amuse ourselves?"

"Tell me some part of your adventures," said Cartouche. "You told me a strange story when I last saw you. My tricks are somewhat better known to fame than yours, or I would

volunteer one of my own; not that I would by this insinuate that you are less deservedly appreciated—far from it—but your reputation is purely provincial. My field has been Paris—from the first."

"I acknowledge your superior merit, my dear friend," replied Mandrin, "but I think you could scarcely enjoy a little piece of revenge better than I did on one occasion at Rouen.

"A lawyer, named Pierre Paul Colpé (a friend of Monsieur Malastéque's), conducted himself in an exceedingly disagreeable manner towards me, making up his mind to ruin me, and trying all he could to ferret me to death: but I continued to keep out of his way. One evening, hearing that a popular preacher intended holding forth in the church on a very absorbing subject, I thought it might be a favourable opportunity to procure a few little things of which I was in want, such as snuff-boxes, rings, watches, pocket-handkerchiefs, and other articles appertaining to the toilet. The

church was crowded in every part, but I contrived, in a manner peculiarly my own, to edge my way almost under the pulpit. The subject on which the preacher descanted with extraordinary eloquence, energy, and effect, was REPENTANCE. He urged most earnestly the confession of sin, openly as well as in private; and he was so far carried away with his argument, that he trespassed a full hour in the night before he had concluded. Scarcely had this popular preacher finished, when I rose gravely and humbly from my seat, and requested to be heard. The eyes of the whole congregation were instantly directed upon me. I crossed my hands meekly on my bosom, and said that the holy man's pathetic discourse had made so lively an impression on me, a miserable sinner, that I had forthwith resolved entirely to change my course of life; and to give a sincere proof of my contrition, I offered before all the congregation freely to confess my crimes. The preacher appeared delighted that his eloquence

had taken so powerful an effect on one of his hearers, at least, and he assented to the proposition—urging me to conceal nothing, and promising me absolution in the event of doing so.

"'I am by profession,' I began, 'an advocate, and for some years past I have abused the confidence of my clients, revealed their secrets, and sacrificed their interests to the adverse party. I acknowledge myself to have been the cause of Monsieur de Girorfleur losing his suit against Madame Vautflé; I confess having invented the whole of Mademoiselle Tournon's case against Monsieur d'Esteville. I own my life to have been one tissue of deceit towards my dear wife, having to support another family with the proceeds of my business. I acknowledge to have turned my son out of doors, and driven him to join a band of thieves by my harshness to him. I confess to having most ungratefully deprived my father of the little pittance which formed the sole support of his

declining age; and allowing him a raw parsnip, and a slice of rye-bread, for his daily nourishment. I own that I have forged several wills; fabricated many deeds without the slightest authority; corrupted my clerks, and made all my servants dishonest! In fine I offer the last proof of my sincerity in declaring my name! I am PIERRE PAUL COLPÉ, of the Rue Puits d'Amour.'

"'Impudent impostor!' roared a voice from the other end of the church, 'I am Pierre Paul Colpé, and I solemnly declare in the presence of this congregation that I cannot reproach myself with any of the faults you have so feloniously heaped upon my head. Seize the villain!' he exclaimed; but the villain in the general confusion had by this time made his way out of the church, rejoicing not a little at the discomfiture of his old foe the advocate."

"Thrice accomplished Mandrin," said Cartouche, "receive, I beseech you, the homage of

your rival. 'Foregad, that was a very clever trick."

"The best of the affair was," remarked Mandrin, "that I had ingeniously used the names of various respectable people in the place, who were among my most astonished auditors: it was in vain that Monsieur Pierre Paul Colpé visited them all (of course *professionally*) on the following day, and utterly disclaimed ever having breathed a word to any human being, in reference to the cases I had thus laid open. All were indignant, offended, and enraged; and the advocate, through my means, lost several of his best and wealthiest clients."

The evening that Cartouche and Mandrin spent together in the little hospital for wounded robbers, was afterwards remembered by each with sentiments of unqualified pleasure. The former, cheered by his friend's *gaieté du cœur*, shortly afterwards recovered, and re-visited his old haunts; and the latter

having returned to the scene of his provincial exploits, frequently boasted of his intimacy with the renowned Parisian thief; and, apparently, followed worthily in his footsteps, for he was afterwards executed for some daring offence, and only regretted in his last moments, that he had lived to mourn Cartouche!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE DEATH OF A HEBREW SAINT—BRAS D'ACIER MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED OPPOSITION—CARTOUCHE ESTABLISHES A SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE—POLITICAL AGITATION—HE ENTERS INTO A WILD SCHEME, AND AFTERWARDS CANCELS ALL OBLIGATIONS WITH BRAS D'ACIER.

A TURN of affairs now took place, which had the effect of bringing this eventful history towards a close. It may readily be imagined that a person of the character of Monsieur Gripon, the undertaker, would not sit down quietly under the loss of his darling money-bags. He felt assured that the fellow who played him the trick about measuring the fat landlady had committed the daring robbery on his premises, and he resolved not to leave a

stone unturned till he discovered and brought the burglar to punishment, for which purpose he arranged his affairs at home, and came to Paris to put himself into communication with the police authorities; and he gave so close a description of the supposed thief, that the officers, one and all, avowed that it must have been the notorious Louis Dominique Cartouche of whom they were in active pursuit. Gripon, as we have before shown, was a determined man of his word. He paid the police officers liberally, and they conducted him from one haunt of infamy and rapine to another, in the hope of discovering his prey. The ferocious undertaker swore within himself a fearful oath, deeper and more dreadful than the excommunication of an incensed pontiff, that he would have the blood of the man who had robbed him. At length, the officers stopped before the door of old Rebecca Mezzia, who, although long ascertained to be an adjunct of thieves, and an expert receiver of stolen property, had

escaped detection and punishment by dint of the most lavish bribery.

"Why," said Gripon to the police-agents, "this is the dwelling of the Jewess, Rebecca Mezzia; I have had dealings with her."

"The devil you have?" inquired the officer, with a knowing wink.

"I have purchased black velvets and silks of her," replied the undertaker, "and very cheap, too."

"Ah! she could afford to sell you a bargain," said the officer. "Nevertheless, let us walk into the premises; we may light on a clue that may lead us to Monsieur Cartouche."

Gripon followed the officers, who appeared to be well acquainted with the house, and they walked up-stairs, where a curious scene presented itself. The old Jewess had reached her eightieth year, and her once sparkling eyes were sightless. She for the last few weeks had been ailing to the extent that her relations of the tribe were now gathered about her, of

course each with a view as to how her property was to be disposed. Rebecca Mezzia was in bed, her head supported by a dingy pillow, trimmed with faded lace. She was, in a feeble tone, admonishing her surrounding kindred.

"My children, to the synagogue ye must walk briskly, but slowly when coming from it. In this ye show a readiness to serve God, and an unwillingness in leaving off the service. Let no man neglect his fringed veil; let the veil be kissed thrice in our place of worship. Let not my nephews omit to wear their frontlets on their left arms, nearest their hearts; let the word *Shaddai* be signified thereon."

"But, venerable Rebecca," asked a grave-looking Israelite, with a keen and anxious glance, "what wilt thou have done with the ebony casket, containing the large pearls?"

The ancient Jewess elevated her head, and replied, "Sell, sell, and divide amongst ye. The sooner the better. Perhaps they had best go to England. Yes, my children, we are a

favoured people of the Almighty. One of ye read the *Agodah,* and hand round the cake, *apheckoman,* for no misfortune will happen to those who eat of it. Is it not the second night of the passover? What did I say about the pearls? *Bless* Mordecai—*curse* Haman. Make the young boys knock on the benches and floor with hammers to strike down Haman."

"Those leathern bags—the old broad pieces of gold," said the former inquirer: "what is thy desire, Rebecca?"

"Lend it to our people to feed well on Saturdays. The Jew who borrows money to live elegantly on the sabbath, the Lord will pay his debts."

Here the voice of the aged Hebrew woman became less articulate. It was evident that the flickering light of her temple was burning out.

"She is dying," whispered the old Jew.

"Emanuel, come hither," muttered Rebecca, with some difficulty. "Emanuel, place thine ear near unto me. In yonder small chest is a

list of all the Paris thieves, their haunts, their connections. Money, gold—much gold—may be gained by it, if made cautious use of."

Not a word of this sentence escaped Gripon.

"They will all pay well to remain undisturbed," continued the old Jewess. "Now, now—I am more faint—children of Israel—chaunt, chaunt my requiem."

Immediately on this last request being made, a Rabbi, with a powerful but melodious voice, sang an air of singular solemnity and beauty, the accompaniments to which were three other voices, harmonising faultlessly with the principal. The words indicated that they were wafting the soul of their sister to Heaven, from which Gentiles and Christians were excluded, as they were classed with beasts, and not with men.

While this pious service was proceeding, Rebecca dropped her lower jaw, and the old receiver of stolen goods went to receive her reward in the other world. Gripon, with the

police-officer, immediately seized on the small chest. This excited some consternation and altercation among the assembled Israelites, but they stood in too much dread of the police to make any attempt to regain possession of the chest. It might be they would not have remained so passive had the officer laid his hands on the pearls, gold, and other valuable property.

Gripon and the police-agent quitted the house, and made their way to the *bureau* of of the Administrator of Secret Police, where the box was duly opened, its contents minutely inspected, and many state secrets of the organised gang were laid bare, and exposed a wonderful catalogue of rascality.

By the means of the papers so obtained, Monsieur Gripon got intelligence as to the females who were the mistresses of Louis Dominique Cartouche, and he made up his mind that through the agency of one or more

of them, his prey might be betrayed into his hands.

During the period that Cartouche was in hiding, after the murder of the stock-broker, for want of the excitement of active employment, his usual confidence in his good fortune, which had rendered (as he termed it in *argot*) "*la botte*," *i. e.*, the gibbet a mere vision, began manifestly to abate. He grew intensely jealous and suspicious of Bras D'Acier. There was from the first a feeling of enmity in this man's mind against Cartouche, and his being compelled to acknowledge, in the acts of infamy, the immeasurable superiority of the latter, was not likely to amend their relative position. Cartouche had discovered that Bras D'Acier was ripe for disaffection; and he had not forgotten the affair of Villers Cotterets.

Cartouche, always restless, determined to return to Paris, and hazard all risks. He boldly exhibited himself at the place of rendezvous;

and thinking that, under all the circumstances, Bras D'Acier would be better at a distance than near, he contrived to get it voted that the one-eyed chief should be sent, with a dozen men, to the vicinity of Meaux, about twenty-five miles from Paris. The neighbourhood was not ill-chosen—rich landlords, farmers, and tradesmen, offering a continual harvest to these prosperous gentlemen. Their robberies on the highway were so systematic that not a day passed without its business in this particular line, and the nightly burglaries were also frequent. For one of the latter, a member of the gang had been brought to summary trial, and condemned to death and exposure on the wheel. The felon was gibbetted after this fashion, in a public road continuous to Meaux, and his comrades were eagerly bent on what they considered an act of retribution. Watching their opportunity, these dastardly monsters seized an unfortunate peasant woman, the mother of a numerous family, and after beating her severely, they tied

her to the wheel beside the decomposing corpse of the brigand. The poor creature remained in this dreadful condition all night. Soon after daylight, some travellers, hearing her groans, rescued her, and conveyed her to a neighbouring house, where she almost immediately expired. This was an act of cruel atrocity worthy of Bras D'Acier; but speedily afterwards an event occurred in which this band of ruffians experienced that which is vulgarly termed "catching a Tartar."

A lady of high rank, residing in the neighbourhood of Meaux, on the last day of the carnival, intending to give a *fête* and ball, requested the military commandant of the district to send her some soldiers, for the maintenance of good order. The commandant accordingly sent four grenadiers of Rehan's regiment, to whom the lady presented a crown each, having plentifully regaled them with wine and provisions during the night.

These grenadiers, elevated with the liquor

they had drank, and being furnished with money, instead of returning to their quarters, took the resolution of proceeding immediately to Chalons, to spend the remainder of the carnival, without reflecting that such a step amounted to nothing less than desertion. They travelled onwards, and about six in the evening coming to a farm-house, they civilly requested to be admitted there for the night. The farmer's wife received them kindly, but begged them to remain in the barn till her husband and son returned from the market of Meaux.

The grenadiers readily complied, and when the farmer came home, he hastened to invite his guests to come into the house, where he treated them hospitably. The soldiers told their stories and sang merrily. But when the supper was over, a loud noise was heard in the court-yard of the farm-house. The wife, having gone to one of the upper windows to discover what was the cause, descended in great alarm, for the premises were surrounded by a troop of rob-

bers, who were loud in their demands to have the door opened to them, or they would force admittance.

The grenadiers instantly told the farmer to fear nothing; for as he had kindly received them, they would do their best endeavours to protect him and his family. They then demanded if he had any fire-arms, and finding that he had two fusees in the house, they desired him and his son to take each one, and to fire as they should direct. Meanwhile, the blows at the door and menaces from Bras D'Acier's band of brigands were redoubled, and on the woman opening the door, on a signal from the grenadiers, who stood ready armed and loaded, the gang rushed in, and the six guns were on the instant discharged, each grenadier taking a deliberate aim. Five of the robbers instantly fell. The soldiers quickly dispatched three more with their bayonets, and three were made prisoners, but the wily Bras D'Acier effected his escape at the door, in the midst of the confusion.

The complete destruction of this banditti, who had been so formidable in and about Meaux, created a great sensation. The grenadiers had been denounced as deserters, but on a proper representation of the affair being made to the Count de Rohan, the court-martial to which the soldiers were submitted, not only relieved them from responsibility, but a subscription was raised, and the grenadiers returned to their ranks covered with glory, and well-provided with money.

Bras D'Acier was so closely pursued, that he thought it best to make his way by night marches to Paris, and the comparative oblivion which is afforded by a crowded city. During his absence, Cartouche had been bold and active in his plans, and his confederates were enthusiastic in their high opinion of him as a chief (*query*, "thief"). Cartouche began to fancy that the police authorities had forgotten him, or, at all events, were no longer bent with the ferocity of a bloodhound on his capture, and he

proposed to himself to profit by this listlessness, in order to commence his brigandage upon a more daring and extended scale.

There could not have been a more favourable opportunity for raising new recruits as ministers of his will. The vast number of persons who, by the schemes of John Law, were raised above their condition in life, and who, by continued gambling speculations, had "fallen into an estate" (if such it could be termed) of the most hopeless destitution, gave him ample opportunity. With such a band at his command, he would exclaim, "I am a monarch after my own fashion. I have mistresses and flatterers, and can command riches and subjects; my ambition creates envy and hate; I have a standing army, and I encamp on the territories of my enemies at their charge and expense." In order the better to provide for his security, he established a system of almost universal *espionage*. He contrived to place an accomplice, as valet or domestic, in all the most distinguished house-

holds, and even in the palace; and personally he made use of the most complicated *ruses* to deceive the archers of the guard, both by night and by day. He never slept in the same place twice consecutively.

Before the Regent (Duke of Orleans) resigned the reigns of government, towards the end of the summer 1721, Louis XV. was seized with a violent fit of sickness, which excited the most serious apprehensions for his life. Great suspicion arose that the young monarch had been poisoned, but the youth of the king successfully resisted the attacks of the disease. On his recovery, the Duke of Orleans concluded a marriage between Louis and the Infanta of Spain. It is true, their ages were not well proportioned, the Infanta being only in her fifth year, and Louis in his thirteenth. It was agreed that the Infanta should be sent to France to be educated, and the Duke de St. Simon was appointed to escort the young princess to Paris. These arrangements of state

do not always turn out happily, for it would appear the young King exhibited symptoms of aversion of his destined bride; and the people, from the extreme youth of the princess, began to be apprehensive that the kingdom might be exposed, by a disputed succession, to the calamities of civil war. Such, at least, were the ostensible motives urged by the new minister, the Duke of Bourbon-Condé, for sending back the Infanta, which measure most violently agitated the Queen of Spain. When the honour of a Spaniard is touched, vengeance must immediately follow. A Spanish colonel, a man of desperate fortune, shortly afterwards appeared in Paris, under the assumed guise of having arrived to enjoy the pleasures of the gay capital. He was well provided with money; and for some time he sought to discover agents to aid him in the real scheme he had come to attempt, and this was, preposterous as it may appear in relation, to carry off the young King from the court of Versailles, to convey him to

Spain, and to enforce the fulfilment of the broken contract. In seeking for some bold confederates, the notorious Cartouche fell in his way, and was, after being put on oath (inutility), engaged for a large sum in the conspiracy. This notion exceedingly delighted Cartouche—it accorded with his mischievous ambition.

Cartouche selected thirty men, of approved courage, for this undertaking. The Spanish colonel, highly pleased with his zeal and devotion, was as sanguine as his wounded honour and revengeful heart could desire. On the 5th of June, in the evening, he, Cartouche, and the accomplices, stopped a coach-and-six, with the king's liveries, and arrested the person in it, on the supposition that it was his young Most Catholic Majesty; it was, however, Monsieur Armand, an equerry to the King, and who so much resembled him that it was a favourite jest at Versailles that monarch and officer should be attired alike. Cartouche grasped his hands, and dragged him from the coach, while the con-

federates cut the traces, and menaced the servants and out-riders. The Spanish colonel then mounted his prize, the supposed King of France, on horseback, and away they rode towards Chatres, where, Monsieur Armand complaining of being indisposed, they procured a carriage, and made their way to Orleans. Cartouche's intimate acquaintance with the bye-roads appeared to be of infinite service to the scheme of the Spanish colonel. It is needless to follow the party in detail with their treasure through the various provinces; suffice it to say, that the Pyrenean frontier was reached. A Spanish body of partisans then took charge of Monsieur Armand; Cartouche and his followers were dismissed, and instantly dispersed in various directions, to avoid the penalty of the heinous crime of treason which they had committed; and the exulting Spanish colonel carried his royal prisoner to the Escurial, where the first person to undeceive and to convince him of his mistaken zeal was the diminutive Infanta her-

self, who informed the colonel that "he had not brought her royal affianced husband."

The Spaniards are naturally a grave people, but they could not repress their laughter on this occasion; and to such an extent, that the colonel took it so seriously to heart, having expended the whole of his small patrimony on the adventure, that one morning, instead of shaving himself, he privately cut his throat.

On Cartouche making his way back to the capital, with a secrecy and rapidity known only to himself, he discovered that affairs had not improved during his absence. He was soon apprised that he was, to a certain extent, betrayed. He now heard of the discomfiture of Bras D'Acier at Meaux, and had clear evidence that it was the intention of the one-eyed ruffian to deliver him up to the hands of justice, as a peace-offering to save himself. Cartouche was not long in deciding that the sooner he got rid of his friend, the better.

He that evening sought Bras D'Acier, and

finding him in one of the secret dens of infamy, invited him at nightfall to accompany him in a walk along the banks of the canal, as he had a serious proposition to make to him. Bras D'Acier had not the slightest notion that his intentions were discovered as to betraying Louis Dominique : so, throwing his cloak around him, they started together. It was dark—dark as the deed contemplated by Cartouche—and they walked moodily on the towing-path.

" Bras," said Cartouche, breaking the silence, " I have been thinking that, were either you or I to come to an untimely death, we have not made our wills, or even appointed our heirs."

Bras D'Acier grunted.

" I think, comrade," added Louis Dominique, " that we might make an advantageous mutual arrangement."

" What d'ye mean ?" inquired he of the one eye.

" I mean," continued Cartouche, " that if I should go off the hooks first, you should become

my heir, and if you should happen accidentally *to die before me*, that I should inherit your property."

"Agreed," growled Bras D'Acier.

"Agreed, agreed!" shouted Cartouche, and at the same moment he plunged a stiletto he had concealed in his sleeve, straight into the heart of Bras D'Acier. The fierce brigand staggered, when Cartouche dexterously repeated the stab, and with a violent blow with his fist, knocked his enemy and fellow-ruffian into the canal.

As Cartouche heard the heavy splash of the body falling into the water, he exclaimed, "Farewell, old Cyclops! two eyes are better than one." And then, with his accustomed composure, he returned to Paris.

Cartouche, Cartouche! we have travelled with thee through many chapters of thy career, but thou canst tempt fate no longer; we augur that thy hours are numbered.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CARTOUCHE IS HUNTED FROM PILLAR TO POST—TAKES REFUGE IN THE MANSARDE—IS BETRAYED INTO THE HANDS OF HIS PURSUERS—HE IS CONVEYED TO PRISON—TRIED AND CONDEMNED—CONFESSES THE CRIMES OF WHICH HE HAS BEEN GUILTY—HIS EXECUTION—THE END.

THROUGH the medium of the documents obtained from Rebecca Mezzia, Gripon first traced out the fish-dealing mistress of Cartouche, Antoinette Fourgasse. On entering into conversation with her, he soon discovered her weak point—jealousy; so he made it his business artfully to inform her that Cartouche visited constantly three other women, to whom he made most superb presents.

He then sought Cunegonde, the German lady to whom Cartouche had paid attentions, and he

tried the same plan with her, but as at the moment she was engaged in discussing the merits of a large dish of sour-crout, spite of the sentimentality of her nation, she did not appear to be much troubled by the mischievous insinuations of Monsieur Gripon.

It was, however, a far different case with the little demure Sœur Grise ; she had the quickest apprehension of all her rivals, and she was so influenced by the artful undertaker, that considering that Cartouche had deeply injured her, she became at once his deadly enemy. Gripon furthered this feeling by acquainting her that Cartouche was that evening to take coffee with *another lady*.

Thus did the fiend Gripon set two fierce female spirits to work. Plant jealousy (one of the ugliest imps in the infernal regions) in the breast of woman, and the deadly venom preys on her vitals, and turns the healthful hue of the freshest cheek to haggard sallowness.

Cartouche had determined to pass a few

hours in the company Geraldine La Volonne, whom we have already named as one of his loves; but on his way towards the street in which she dwelt, to his surprise and horror—for at first he verily believed it to be a spectre—he encountered his old pest, the shirtless cavalier, Bavarde de Tromperie. Cartouche had inwardly congratulated himself on beholding with his own eyes Monsieur Tromperie sink under the ice on the memorable skaiting expedition in Holland.

The cavalier accosted his old friend with much apparent warmth of manner.

"Ha! my excellent friend, well met. I missed you all at once in the Flanders campaign—had the misfortune to trip with the skaits; in the hole, upon my soul. A halberdier laid his pike across the ice, luckily, when I came up, I grasped it, and France thus saved a brave gentleman and soldier."

Cartouche inwardly cursed the officious halberdier.

"My dear fellow, where are you going? I will accompany you," said Bavarde de Tromperie.

Louis Dominique excused himself. He felt that this knave and fool, although the most insignificant of all the villains by whom he had been surrounded, had proved the source of the greatest annoyance to him.

Cartouche quitted Bavarde de Tromperie abruptly—but this was a measure that did not at all suit the notions of the elegant cavalier, who had made up his mind to pass a convivial and intellectual evening with his old comrade; so he watched Cartouche unperceived, and saw him safe into the lodging of Geraldine La Valonne.

He had scarcely effected this purpose, when Gripon, accompanied by the Sœur Grise, and Antoinette Fourgasse, arrived. The women were both known to Bavarde de Tromperie, the vagabond being eminently accomplished in the sublime art of flattery.

Posted in the rear of Gripon were twelve picked men of the archers of the guard, under the command of a sergeant. Gripon rejoined them in their place of concealment, and bade the sergeant to follow him, in ten minutes, to the Rue Agissaz, where the courtesan dwelt.

Meanwhile Gripon, the two infuriated ladies, and Bavarde de Tromperie, walked towards the house, where they had made sure that Cartouche intended to pass the night in fancied security. The incessant babbling, however, of the shirtless cavalier, alarmed Louis Dominique, who was ascending the staircase: in the same manner as, it is said, a goose once saved Rome: and Cartouche permitting his prudence to overcome his passion, quietly entered a small chamber, dropped from a back window of one story high into a yard, scaled a wall, crossed three or four gardens, and forcing a gate leading to the last of them, was again in a public thoroughfare.

Distrustful, aware that there was some active movement against him, he suddenly turned his

steps in the direction of the old *mansarde* in the *Rue des Petits Oiseaux.* "Perhaps," thought he, "the wretched hole, which has so often proved a sanctuary, may still be untenanted; it must be a desperate wayfarer indeed who would venture thither."

For the first time, probably, during his eventful career, Cartouche glided through the streets with a misgiving heart, and a trembling step. A presentiment of evil hung over his spirits; he felt as if he were hunted by blood-hounds, who scented their prey on the very ground he passed over, and who might trace him even to the threshold of his last retreat—from which there was no means of flight, and, it might be, no chance of defence.

Gripon, leaving his female companions, ascended the lodging of the courtesan, and followed by the archers, made certain of seizing his contemplated victim. But after a close inspection of the whole premises he discovered that he was foiled, and he pulled his grey hairs

from his head in rage and despair. "*Ah! quelle fatalité,*" he exclaimed, "*Cartouche est échappé, et nous l'avons encore manqué.*"

In the meantime Louis Dominique ventured to ascend the familiar and creaking staircase, until he arrived at the old door, but recollecting the impervious shade of the *mansarde*, he had been bold enough to obtain a light to the dark lantern, which, as a professional implement, he always carried about him. He tried the lock; it was strongly fastened and would not give way to his efforts; with a clever house-breaking instrument, he withdrew the screws of the hinges of the ancient door, which soon yielded to his practised hand. He entered the room in the roof, and cautiously replaced the door temporarily. He was assailed by an overpowering death-like odour, which pervaded the wretched apartment. He looked around, and ventured towards one of the truckle beds, it was empty. As he was gazing at it, with a notion that it might serve him for the night, several heavy

cadaverous-looking flies buzzed against his lantern, attracted by the light. Cartouche approached the other miserable couch, where he beheld a sight that appalled even *his* stout heart —there lay the corpse of Inigo in so emaciated a state, that it was evident that some dreadful malady must have first overtaken him, and starvation, utter starvation, had completed his dissolution.

This was a scene of horrible desolation that Cartouche could not endure, and he rushed from the *mansarde* on to the landing-place, and sorely puzzled his brain as to what should be his next movement. He descended the stairs, and his quick ear detected the measured tramp of armed men. He rushed to a door that admitted to a set of apartments on the ground floor, and boldly rung the bell. On repeating this, an inmate came to the door, and inquired what was wanted? Cartouche said that a person was dying on the upper floor, and implored instant assistance; the door was opened, and

Louis Dominique entered, and commenced, in a sufficiently agitated tone, a plausible tale. At this moment the archers of the guard, conducted by the jealous Antoinette Fourgasse, and followed by a mob attracted by curiosity, entered on the staircase.

The *poissonière* had visited Cartouche several times in the *mansarde*, and suggested to the officer of the archers, that the place should be searched, as the retreat to which the robber might have betaken himself. The print of footsteps in the fresh mud from the street, were tracked up the staircase.

The door of the miserable *mansarde* was discovered to have been broken open, the beds —and that dreadful bed was searched. Then there was an attempt to trace the footsteps down again, but the tramp of the archers had obliterated those of Cartouche. He still clung to the hope of preservation, when a small terrier dog, belonging to the proprietor of the apartments into which Cartouche had ventured,

began to bark incessantly. Cartouche flew at it, with the intention of at once choking it, but the terrier being small and agile, was not to be caught. Cartouche was dreadfully exasperated, and this feeling was augmented by the severe bites which the terrier contrived to inflict on him. Alarmed by the constant barking of the dog, the archers broke open the door, and Cartouche, as a last resource dashed beneath a bed. He drew his pistols, and clutched one in each hand. The archers filled the rooms, the mob the passages and staircases; escape was impossible. The dog appeared frantic with shrill barking, and led the way at once to the bed. Cartouche, after ineffectually firing his pistols, was dragged from his hiding-place, overpowered, and secured.

The malefactor was placed in a carriage, strongly pinioned with an exempt on either side, eight horse soldiers and a dozen foot guards surrounding and following.

The news spread like wildfire through the

city, and the joy at the capture of the notorious Cartouche was universal. It seemed as though the immense reward offered had gone into the pockets of every one who spoke of this affair; and so important did it appear, that Monsieur D'Argenson undertook to announce it specially to the King with as little delay as possible. His Majesty appeared much pleased, and ordered an extreme punishment. The privy council laid aside other business; and between the criminal court and the parliament a dispute arose as to whose jurisdiction the affair belonged. Monsieur D'Argenson, backed by the council, settled this matter, by transferring the *procès* to the Conciergerie.

When Cartouche, with his escort, arrived at the prison, one of the exempts in getting out of the vehicle, pressed somewhat against the prisoner, who turning to him, said, with infinite effrontery, "Scoundrel, take care you do not wound me," and he kicked at the officer; upon which several of the archers seized the robber,

and carried him into the dungeon of the Tower of Montgomery, where he was to wait until further orders.

It is said that the tower in which the infamous Ravaillac was confined was in reality the one appointed for the reception of Cartouche. A strong iron chain, reaching from the upper chamber, encircled his body, and he was further secured with manacles. About this time, five of his followers were arrested at Orleans, three in the forest of Senlis, and several daily in Paris. They were confronted in the presence of the Minister of Police, and Cartouche boldly denied any knowledge of them, and they did the same by him. He further denied his own identity, and described himself as Charles Boursignon, son of a woman of that name at Bar sur Seine; when further questioned on this subject, he would call for a bottle of Burgundy, and ask if the way he relished that wine did not prove the truth of his assertion. The gaiety of the villain was inexhaustible; he sang

loose songs, repeated ribald jests, and exhibited little respect to the authorities who interrupted him. Several ladies of the first distinction called to see him, one of whom presented him with a bouquet of flowers and a homily that had lately been composed and printed under the censorship of the press, "that all sinners, would they embrace the *real* tenets, and *confess* their sins, might die as martyrs or saints!"

One lady compassionated him on account of his being obliged to lie on straw.

"Hard enough, Madame," he replied, "but it is nothing when you are used to it. A man's lot *in the straw*, cannot be compared for pain with that of a woman."

Painters and engravers were now busily engaged on his portrait. His popularity (or rather notoriety) was so great, that a comedy entitled "CARTOUCHE," was produced at one of the theatres. Songs describing his exploits were among the best speculations of the day. But this *nonchalance* was brought to an abrupt

termination by the traces of a murder which was fully proved against him, and by his being recognised as one who attempted to carry off the King. The undertaker Gripon stuck fast to his skirts, and he was also found guilty of that robbery.

His aged mother and sister were called in to identify him, a needless and cruel experiment to them. He disowned them. But all the accusations against him were proved, and to break his prison was impossible.

From that moment he lost courage. The associated band of robbers were bound by a solemn oath to release their captain in the hour of danger; but he knew their jealousy, their disaffection, their total want of faith, too well, to place much hope in the promised rescue. He could not for one moment doubt the issue of the trial. All the tortures that the human mind could imagine were reserved for him—how soon would death end them? He remembered—and the recollection came bitterly

and remorsefully across him at the moment—that once in the days of almost unlimited power, having witnessed the execution of a malefactor, a strange and inexplicable feeling of curiosity prompted him four-and-twenty hours afterwards to visit the spot. The wheel, the iron bars, the victim, were still there. He gazed on the seemingly-lifeless body, until he fancied he saw the broken limbs quiver, and the upturned eyes unclose. He watched still more eagerly; he saw the lips part slowly, he heard a sigh—a sob—and one scarcely articulated word —WATER!

Cartouche passed on. The impression made by that one despairing word was quickly effaced, and he thought no more of the Place de la Grève, till the time came when he could count the hours and minutes that must intervene before he was chained to that fatal wheel himself!

It was at this period that a carriage drove up to the gate of the prison, and an elegantly-

formed female, wrapped in a mantilla, sought an anxious interview with the governor of the Conciergerie, which was granted with difficulty.

She then placed on the table of his apartment a heavy purse of gold, and begged of the governor's clemency that its contents might be applied to the personal wants and comforts of the prisoner Cartouche. That if more money was wanted, it should instantly be supplied; and that any surplus should be given to the priest who should attend the criminal in his last moments, if he would undertake masses for the repose of his soul. The governor was much struck with the beauty and graceful appearance of the lady, who came on this charitable mission, and who was very much affected as she earnestly expressed her wishes, which he promised to fulfil. She then, sobbing hysterically, withdrew.

Cartouche was supplied with everything he required under his circumstances, but never knew that he was indebted for these ameliora-

tions in his condition, and the consolations of religion, to his earliest friend—Rose Coquillarde!

After a minute trial, SENTENCE OF DEATH was passed on him, on the 20th of November, 1721.

On the morning of the 27th, the torture was applied; but he revealed nothing beyond certain robberies, and the fact that he had killed an exempt while defending himself.

He carefully abstained from involving any one of his gang, or giving any clue to their discovery, determined to respect his oath of fidelity to the last, and by so doing appeal to their sense of generosity, which he imagined was not yet extinct in the midst of all their demoralisation; and this feeling, which he could not, or would not quell, buoyed him up during the few days which elapsed between his condemnation and his execution. But even in that short space of time the alteration in his personal appearance was so apparent, as to leave little doubt that re-

morse for the frightful crimes he had committed weighed heavily on his conscience. He rejected, until the night preceding the appointed day, the aid and offices of religion; he had no being he loved, and *who loved him*, to bid farewell to; he had in early life alienated his affections from his family; there would not be one man in the mob that filled La Grève, who would not call down curses on his head, and applaud the justice of his sentence.

From the narrow-grated loop-hole of his cell, Cartouche beheld the rising sun, as it threw a golden streak of light on the objects around; and as he gazed, he wondered—doubted—if he should see it on the morrow, if he should be still breathing, feeling, *enduring*, when it sunk into the west that evening.

Nearer and nearer the fatal moment approached.

At about five o'clock in the afternoon, he was conducted to La Grève where he was to be broken alive on the wheel.

Scaffolding was erected on all sides, and windows and seats were densely crowded with spectators. The places had been engaged at enormous prices.

On the way from the Conciergerie, an incident occurred almost too ludicrous to be mentioned at so awful a moment; the fool, Bavarde de Tromperie, got as close as he possibly could to the cart in which Cartouche was pinioned, and besought him "to die like a gentleman." A police officer pounced on the charlatan, for whom he had been in search for a petty theft, and conveyed him to gaol.

When the cart arrived at the Place de la Grève, Cartouche beheld the fatal wheel, and an elevation for the executioner and his assistants, who were gloomily busying themselves in the preparation of their instruments. A sudden thrill of horror appeared to come over him, and he exclaimed, "*Voila un vilain aspect!*"

Observing this, his confessor attempted to

draw from him a revelation of all he knew, but Cartouche declared he had nothing to discover. Shortly after, he mounted the scaffold with an intrepid air, and looked rapidly round on every side, expecting that some large portion of his numerous followers would have assembled to his rescue, as by the most execrable oaths they were bound to do. Seeing no indication of their presence, he considered himself no longer under the obligation of a brigand's oath, which, until that moment, he had inviolably preserved. His firmness now abandoned him, and he told the confessor that he wished to speak to his judges —that he had important secrets to communicate before he died.

The priest exhorted him to make a sincere avowal, and Cartouche was immediately conducted into the Hotel de Ville, where he made an ample discovery of his crimes, of the names of his accomplices, and their deeds. The archers of the guard had been extremely active during the day, and had arrested some thirty of his

comrades. They were brought to the Hotel de Ville, and were confronted with their late leader who addressed them thus :—

"Messieurs, deem it not ill that I declare to my judges who you are, and what you have done. I have suffered the severities of torture without avowing anything, rejoiced to imagine that you were, if possible, not inculpated. But my confessor has commanded me, in the name of the MOST HIGH, to make an unreserved discovery of all I know; and this I do with the greater warrant, since you, among others, have failed in the oaths you took to deliver me from this last peril, at the risk of your lives."

Cartouche accordingly detailed the places where he had deposited valuable stolen goods and money; describing among the rest, a spot in the Bois de Boulogne, where a vast amount of silver, plate, jewels, and gold, was hidden.

Cartouche was then re-conducted to the scaffold, and being chained to the wheel, received ONZE COUPS VIFS—eleven *almost*

mortal blows from an iron bar. Every limb was broken in succession, and there he was left to expire the most horrible of deaths. His corpse was given up to the executioner, who, according to the brutal fashion of the time, collected a very large sum by its exhibition. It was then transferred to the surgeons of St. Come, who also exposed it to view in the same manner, and made exorbitant demands of the artists who thronged thither to make sketches. The arch-fiend Gripon came, and claimed to bury the remains, and he exulted over his task!

Thus we conclude our memoirs of this extraordinary man. One of the most celebrated of those who live in the worship of the BAD, but whose vivacity and presence of mind, judgment and intrepidity, might have fitted him to be an ORNAMENT, in lieu of the CURSE, of his day.

And now, reader, if we have related to you a ribald tale, if we have spoken too lightly of the enormities committed by the hero of it, if we

have heralded only the crimes, vices, and follies practised by outcasts of society, it has not been without a moral aim. We have not described Cartouche in such glowing colours, or with such redeeming qualities as would induce the most unwary or unthinking to select him as a model for imitation: his fancied pleasures are infinitely overbalanced by his frequent discomfitures, and heavy cares.

He had not known the delights that emanate from rectitude of conduct, and a clear conscience: he had not felt the charming comfort of filial duty: the serene felicity obtained by the calm affection of a mother or a sister: he was ignorant of the greatest blessing Heaven can bestow on man, a happy domestic home, crowned with true love: gently swayed by one whose heart is firmly linked to that of her husband, and whose whole pleasure is to secure by daily kindnesses the tranquillity and ease of him, and the dear objects that have sprung from their union. It was not his fate to watch

the dawnings of mind in beloved and innocent children—a source of purest happiness. It was not his relief from ennui or monotony, that he was forced to active and pleasant employ, to feed, to clothe, to educate his offspring!

No, all was derived from sefiishness, avarice, misdirected ambition, false notion of pleasures, infidelity, and sensuality.

Though endowed with a brutal hardihood, which we cannot honour with the name of courage, and a restless spirit of adventure, these led not to any sensation of happiness in this world, or for hope in another. No, there was the constant corroding canker at his heart —the dread of detection—the hourly fear that he might be sold by his infamous confederates to the bloodhounds who were seeking him for years. Ever surrounded by the vicious, he could not, by any possibility ascertain the glow at the bosom which accompanies a virtuous or charitable act.

The education he received at Clermont might have enabled him to have steered his way through the world with its customary reverses or elevations, but with a clean breast.

His talents in all probability would have placed him in the agreeable situation of a moderate competence.

All this he *might* have accomplished, but we most humbly beg to assure our readers that if he had been a just and honest character, pursuing a straight-forward path, in the jog-trot road of life, this tale would

NEVER HAVE BEEN WRITTEN!

FINIS.

Aird and Burstall, Printers, 2, Tavistock-street, Covent-garden.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 084216552